Japan (Jap. Nihon [Nippon])

Hugh de Ferranti, Shigeo Kishibe, David W. Hughes, W. Adriaansz, Robin Thompson, Charles Rowe, Donald P. Berger, W. Malm, W.P. Malm, David Waterhouse, Allan Marett, Richard Emmert, Fumio Koizumi, Kazuyuki Tanimoto, Masakata Kanazawa, Linda Fujie and Elizabeth Falconer

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Country in East Asia. With an area of 370,000 km² and a population of about 126·43 million (2000), it principally comprises four main islands (Honshū, Kyūshū, Hokkaidō and Shikoku) and the Ryūkyū archipelago, extending in an arc between Kyūshū and Taiwan. Early cultural influences flowed from Japan’s proximity to China and Korea to the west. Although generally considered to be ethnically homogeneous, Japan is culturally diverse, with distinctive cultures especially in the far south (Ryukyuan) and the far north (Ainu culture of Hokkaidō) complementing the mainstream of Japanese culture.

I. General

Hugh de Ferranti

1. History

Shigeo Kishibe

The modern period of Japanese history dates from the Meiji Restoration of 1868, when a constitutional monarchy was established after nearly seven centuries of feudalism. During this period the country was opened to the outside world and its influences, so that by the mid-20th century music in Japan reflected mixtures of three basic types: Japanese traditional music, Western traditional music and international modern trends. In Tokyo audiences enjoy concerts of Western classical music given by Japanese and foreign performers, while on nightly television programmes Japanese singers perform popular songs in Western or Japanese idioms. On the surface, traditional music seems neglected. But although there has been a decrease in the number of professional performers and lovers of such music, and a few genres have disappeared, the surviving traditions have been maintained at a high standard. An important factor in this is the continuing presence of a strong musicians’ guild system, which has since ancient times (see§3 below) reinforced the various styles of each musical genre. Such continuing traditions are sustained not only in art music but also in the rich variety of folk music that flourishes throughout the country.

Japanese traditional music has retained most of the major genres of each historical period before modernization. For example, from the early Middle Ages (11th–15th centuries) one finds *gagaku* (ancient court music), *shōmyō* (Buddhist chant), narrative music on the *biwa* (lute) and *nō* drama, while

the later Middle Ages (17th century–1868) are represented by music for the *koto* (zither), *shamisen* (lute) and *shakuhachi* (end-blown flute) and by much folk music. Another regular feature of Japanese music is its sensitive combination of drama and dance, this synthesis perhaps being best represented by the *nō* and *kabuki* dramas.

The history of Japanese music can be divided into five stages of stylistic development, corresponding to stages in the country's socio-political and economic history (see Table 1).

TABLE 1

		Music	*Political period*	*Society and economy*
(i)	Early ancient	period of indigenous music	6th century and earlier	clan system, slave labour
(ii)	Late ancient	period of international music	Asuka, 552–645 Nara, 710–84 Early Heian, 794–897	clan system organized under governmental control
(iii)	Early Middle Ages	1st period of national music	Late Heian, 897–1185 Kamakura, 1192–1333 Muromachi, 1338–1573	feudal society
(iv)	Late Middle Ages	2nd period of national music	Momoyama, 1573–1603 Edo, 1603–1868	feudal society dominated by shogunate
(v)	Modern	period of international music	Meiji, 1868–1912, and after	industrial capitalism

Table 1

Table 1

(i) Indigenous music

Features of the music of the early ancient period are only vaguely known through archaeological materials (see §II, 2 below) and historical sources of the 8th century; the latter describe musical instruments such as the *koto* (zither), *fue* (flute), *tsuzumi* (drum) and *suzu* (bell-tree). These instruments have native names and are thought to be indigenous, whereas most of those that appeared later originated in China. The performing arts were a reflection of the way of life in Japan's Neolithic and early Bronze periods. During this time the ancient clan system was developing into an imperial state. The basic shamanism of early antiquity became systematized into a state religion called Shintō ('The Way of the Gods'), which helped to strengthen the political power of the imperial court. The music and dance of Shintō ceremonies had already become the main body of court music by the end of this period when, in the 5th and 6th centuries, mainland Asian styles began to stream into Japan.

(ii) Continental Asian music

The introduction of continental East Asian music and dance, first from Korea and then from China, greatly changed the character of Japanese music. The introduction of Buddhism through Korea in the 6th century also had considerable influence. The first Chinese performing art to reach Japan at this time was *gigaku* (masked dances and pageants), which was imported by Koreans during the Asuka period (*c*552–645 CE); the Hōryūji, which is the world's oldest surviving wooden building, was constructed during this period. *Gigaku* was followed by *gagaku*, which consisted of various kinds of Korean and Chinese court music and dance. These were organized, together with indigenous music,

under a government music department called the Gagakur-yō. During this period an important governmental musical event took place as part of the celebration in 749 of the completion of a colossal bronze statue of the Buddha for the Tōdaiji monastery in Nara, then the capital. The Shōsōin, the imperial treasury of the Emperor Shōmu (*d* 756) in Nara, contains 75 musical instruments of 18 kinds that were used in these ceremonies. They are excellent and rare evidence of the international origins of *gagaku*, for although some instruments came from Tang dynasty China or Korea, others originated in India, Persia or Central Asia. However, the international features of *gagaku* were modified to Japanese taste and style when the aristocracy replaced the government as the major sponsor of such music early in the Heian period (794–1185 CE). Buddhist chant (*shōmyō*), which had its origins in India and was introduced into Japan via China, was another major imported genre of the period.

(iii) National music

In the later Heian period feudal warriors (samurai) began to exert influence on the cultural and political activities of Japan. The Minamoto [Genji] family established the first feudal government (shogunate) in the Kamakura period (1192–1333) and was followed in the Muromachi period (1338–1573) by the Ashikaga family. The names of the periods are derived from these clans' respective capitals, Kamakura being a city about 50 km south-west of Tokyo and Muromachi being the name of an area in the city of Kyoto. Cultural activities in the first half of the Middle Ages were centred on such samurai clans and Buddhist priests.

Besides the modified courtly and Buddhist music of this period there were two important new genres that seem quite national in character. One was *heike-biwa*, a unique style of vocal narrative music accompanied on the *biwa* lute. Originating during the Kamakura period, *heike-biwa* would later give rise to the *satsuma-biwa* and *chikuzen-biwa* traditions and to some genres of *shamisen* music, particularly *gidayū*, the highly developed narrative music of *bunraku* (puppet theatre) (see §II, 3 and 6 below).

The second major genre that developed in the Muromachi period is a theatrical form called *nō* (see §VI, 1 below). Representing the highest expression of Japanese aesthetic theory, it is a perfect marriage of drama, theatre, music, dance and costume. The beauty of *nō* music lies in its refined symbolism and its combination of simplicity with sophistication and of stereotypes with flexibility. The style and spirit of *nō* have been regarded as the outstanding achievement in Japan's indigenous performing arts.

Whereas support for music in the early Middle Ages came primarily from the upper classes (samurai and Buddhist priests), the three new major genres of the Momoyama (1573–1603) and Edo (1603–1868) periods arose among the merchants and artisans of the cities. The Tokugawa family shogunate dominated the nation throughout the Edo period, but it could not suppress the new culture that developed naturally from the increasing rise of the merchant class and, in fact, affected all classes. Women from both the samurai and merchant classes, for example, enjoyed performing songs accompanied by the 13-string *koto* (long zither), a style that had been first established by blind musicians. The most popular forms of lyrical and narrative vocal music of the period are found in genres accompanied by the three-string *shamisen* plucked lute. Though the instrument developed from the Chinese *sanxian*, its structure became quite different, and its music was derived primarily from Japanese *kabuki* and puppet theatre traditions. *Kabuki* in particular provided a context for numerous genres of *shamisen* music to meet and develop. Another popular instrument was the *shakuhachi*, an

end-blown bamboo flute. Used at first by itinerant priests of the Fuke sect of Zen Buddhism, it became popular among people of every class, and soon a cadre of professional secular players developed, many of whom became associated with *koto*-based chamber music in the 19th century.

Although these three new genres of music (defined here by their respective main instruments, *koto*, *shamisen* and *shakuhachi*) were held in great esteem, the older musical styles such as *gagaku* and *nō* also retained a respected position as the art music of the upper classes. By this time, however, *gagaku* and *nō* had already lost their original function as entertainment and became formalized into a kind of cultural ritual for the court, shrine, temple or élite samurai society.

(iv) Western influences

The period of national music ended with the modernization of Japan when the country was opened to the outside world in 1868. Since then Japan has developed under liberalism and capitalism and has delved enthusiastically into all kinds of Western classical and popular music. Traditional music has gradually lost some of its importance, and many efforts have been made to combine traditional Japanese and Western idioms in both art and popular music. It is evident also that Japan has, with its remarkable energy and talent, contributed to the creation of new styles in international contemporary music.

Since the 1970s Japan has also become more involved with other non-Western musics: thus one might encounter young Japanese performing Balinese *kecak* among the skyscrapers of Tokyo. The growth of ethnomusicology, ease of travel, the ‘World Music’ phenomenon and increased media access to diverse cultural products have all had an impact on music activity in Japan.

2. Aesthetics

Shigeo Kishibe

The aesthetics of Japanese traditional music, like its theory and style, must be understood in the context of Japan’s historical periods. The Japanese emphasis on monophonic or non-harmonized music has produced other specific characteristics: the delicate use of microtones, the importance of timbre and the refinement of free rhythm. Musical aesthetics have varied from period to period, although in later times the aesthetics of earlier periods lingered and often mingled with one another. If representative ideas are chosen from each period, they may be summarized as follows: purity (*kiyosa*) from early antiquity; refined and courtly taste (*miyabi*) from late antiquity; symbolism and sober poverty (*wabi*, *sabi*, *yūgen*, *hana*) from the early Middle Ages; and smartness and elegance (*iki* and *sui*) from the later Middle Ages. The philosophies of Shintō and Buddhism, especially Zen Buddhism, provide the aesthetic bases of the Japanese approach to most arts and, together with Confucianism, form the moral framework within which the different arts exist. Multiplicity, rather than symmetry and unity, might be regarded as the basic feature of the style and form of Japanese music. Japan has a rich variety of seasons and climates; its people have thought that human beings must be in harmony with nature, rather than resistant to it. Such thinking has been reflected in Japanese music throughout the ages.

3. Transmission

David W. Hughes

The nature of Japanese music is in close symbiosis with its modes of transmission. For many genres, the right to perform was severely restricted. For example, court performers' roles were hereditary, with transmission from father to son; moreover, each instrument or skill was passed on in a separate lineage. Professional (i.e. profit-making) performance of certain traditions, such as *biwa* (see §II, 3(iii) below), *koto* and *jiuta shamisen* (see §II, 6(ii) below), was for several centuries legally restricted to blind performers' guilds, principally the *Tōdō-za* or *Tōdōshoku-yashiki*. *Shakuhachi* performance was also legally restricted to members of the Fuke sect of Zen for two centuries. Such restrictions were often violated, but in any case they were lifted in 1871 as part of modernization. Women were also excluded from various genres; even now, most Japanese consider it inappropriate for a woman to perform, say, *shakuhachi* or 'official' forms of the theatre genres *nō* and *kabuki*.

Modernization did not, however, lead to total liberalization. Most genres of traditional classical music and dance and, recently, even folksong are now taught within the *iemoto* ('househead') system, via hierarchically structured 'schools' or 'lineages' (*ryū* (*-ha*)) with an autocratic *iemoto* at the head, who makes decisions about repertory, performance style, licensing of teachers and so forth. Such institutional transmission is much debated. On the one hand, it tends to restrict creativity and access and can be economically exploitative. On the other, it is considered responsible for the survival of many traditions that might otherwise have died or altered beyond recognition (alteration over the centuries, extreme in the case of *gagaku* and *nō*, is often denied or downplayed by performers). Many aspects of teaching methods can be related to such restrictive transmission. Thus musical notation (see §III below) is often comparatively vague, partly as a way to limit access. The emphasis is on exact imitation of one's teacher; deviation can best be achieved by starting one's own 'school'.

Westernization brought threats to the survival of traditional genres. The national education system, created along Western lines in the 1870s, has tended until recently to overlook traditional music. One 20th-century response was the emergence of Preservation Societies (*hozonkai*), especially in the folk world, where the *iemoto* system was absent. A *hozonkai* is usually an organization under local control devoted to 'preserving' (but also usually developing and propagating) a local song or dance, often a single item. *Hozonkai* have the same virtues and drawbacks as the *iemoto* system.

Beginning in the mid-20th century, the survival of certain traditions has been helped by government intervention. To encourage young performers of the music theatre genres, there are now government training schools based in national theatres. More important is the Ministry of Education's elaborate system of National Cultural Properties, which designates particular traditions as 'important intangible cultural properties' (*jūyō mukei bunkazai*) and certain artists as 'living National Treasures' (*ningen kokuhō*) and provides some financial support.

4. Scales and modes

David W. Hughes

Discussion of modal theory for individual genres will be found in some sections below (*see also* Mode, §V, 5, (ii)). There is great diversity among these genres; despite or because of this, researchers have been keen to establish a modal theory that could encompass many or all types of traditional Japanese music. Prior to the late 19th century the only extensive modal theory was that for *gagaku* (court music); early theorizing did not extend to detailed analysis of tonal function or melodic patterns, and the focus was mainly on scales (tonal material), tunings and modal classification of pieces. It was recognized, however, that court music modes fell into two groups, *ritsu* and *ryo*, each with an anhemitonic pentatonic core with two 'exchange tones' (*hennon*, from Chinese *bianyin*) that could replace two of the core degrees (in ascending melodic passages in the case of *ritsu*, in descent for *ryo*). The modal terminology of *gagaku* was sometimes applied to other genres but rarely provided insight.

The first significant Japanese attempt at an overview, important to all subsequent work, was Uehara's *Zokugaku senritsu kō* (1895). Focussing on folk and popular musics, he distinguished two basic Japanese pentatonic 'modes' (*senpō*, as opposed to *onkai* or 'scale'; this terminological distinction is often ignored). These he called *in* and *yō* (similar to Chinese *yin* and *yang*), or *miyako-bushi* ('urban melody') and *inaka-bushi* ('rural melody') respectively. If C is used as a 'tonic' (*kyū*; a court-music concept of Chinese origin), then Uehara's 'urban melody' *in* mode is C D♭ F G A♭ C, but with A♭ replaced by B♭ (and sometimes D♭ by E♭) in ascending passages. The *yō* mode (identical in this thinking with the *ritsu* category of court modes) differed from this only in using D♮ and A♮ instead of D♭ and A♭ (outside court music absolute pitch is of little significance; all pitches in this section are relative).

Koizumi, in his 1958 book, created the model that is now generally followed by Japanese researchers. He expanded Uehara's scheme to four ideal-typical modes that he felt accounted for the vast majority of Japanese musics, abandoning Uehara's octave-based theory and focussing instead on the tetrachord as the basic modal structure. In this he acknowledged Lachmann (1929) as his inspiration. However, other Western researchers had also proposed similar approaches (Knott, Abraham and Hornbostel, Peri). Knott identified trichords and was followed by Peri, while the Germans persisted with the tetrachord. The successful application of this ancient Greek approach to Japanese music is doubtless the major contribution of early Western researchers to Japanese music studies. Koizumi's tetrachord consists of two stable 'nuclear tones' (German: *Kernton*; Japanese: *kakuon*) a 4th apart plus a single infix, the position of which determines the species of tetrachord. He calls for four types: the *in* or *miyako-bushi* (C, D♭, F), *ritsu* (C, D, F), *yō* or *min'yō* ('folksong') (C, E♭, F) and *ryūkyū* (C, E, F). These combine to form various octave species characteristic of particular types of music. An important difference from Uehara is that Koizumi abandoned the Chinese-derived tendency to think in terms of a single 'tonic' and recognized that the various nuclear tones may compete as tonal centres, leading to various types of modulation (for an English summary of his model, see Koizumi, 1976–7).

M. Shibata (1978) proposed another general model, indebted to Koizumi's yet differing significantly. Whereas Koizumi focussed on the frame created by the 4ths, Shibata shifted attention to their upper and lower neighbours. For example, in a melody basically using the *in* scale, a passage such as f–d♭–c–B♭ might occur, where B♭ substitutes for the expected A♭, especially when serving as a lower neighbour between two occurrences of the c. Koizumi's approach requires positing a change of the lower tetrachord from *in* to *yō*, whereas for Shibata it is just a matter of yielding to the centripetal force of the nuclear tone c (a process recognized also by Koizumi). Among the few adherents to Shibata's approach, Tokumaru has applied it to *shamisen* music (e.g. 1981) and Sawada to Buddhist chant (in *Nihon no onkai*, 1982). Matsumoto (1965) seems to have had no influence.

Koizumi's and Shibata's models work well for most genres, if applied flexibly. Japanese 4ths and 5ths are near-perfect, but the 'infixes' of Koizumi's theory are often quite variable in intonation. For example, the semitones of the *in* mode are often 90 cents or less, although Western influence (plus electronic tuning devices for *koto* etc) are moving this towards 100.

Western influence has also led to the adoption of the 'pentatonic major' (*yona-nuki chōonkai*: C, D, E, G, A) and 'pentatonic minor' (*yona-nuki tan'onkai*: C, D, E♭, G, A♭). These are, in effect, versions of the *yō* and *in* scales with their tonics re-located to suit Western-style harmonization, and they occur particularly in 'new folk songs', school songs and the *enka* popular song style (see §§VII and IX, 3 below), all genres in which a flavour of traditional pentatonicism is desired.

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II. Instruments and instrumental genres

1. Introduction

David W. Hughes

Japan possesses a rich variety of traditional musical instruments: there are over 200 distinct types and subtypes. Despite this abundance, only four instruments have played a particularly prominent role in traditional music and merit individual discussion – *biwa*, *koto*, *shakuhachi* and *shamisen* (see §§ 3–6 below). Many other instruments are of importance in one genre or (like the *shō* and *hichiriki* of *gagaku*) occur in only a single genre; they are discussed in the relevant sections below. Still others, such as bamboo transverse flutes and various stick drums, are widespread in a variety of musics.

Although most genres of Japanese music involve singing, there exist several important examples of pure instrumental music: solo pieces (*honkyoku*) for *shakuhachi*; improvisatory solos for *tsugaru-jamisen*; *matsuri-bayashi* festival music of the Tokyo area; *gagaku*; and the *danmono* subtype of popular *koto* music. There are also long instrumental solos (*tegoto*, *ai-no-te* etc.) in many predominantly vocal pieces, and long instrumental dance pieces in the *nō* theatre. Even when instruments are sounded with vocals, their importance is sometimes reflected in the traditional folk and modern scholarly names for the genres: *heike-biwa* for the battle narratives accompanied by *biwa* lute; *sōkyoku* ('*koto* music') for the entire secular *koto* repertory; *uta-sanshin* for Okinawan 'song-[plus]-*sanshin*'.

Virtually all Japanese instruments have close relatives in China, and it is likely that they originated there before being modified significantly to suit local needs. Most major instrumental types occur (or have occurred) in Japan, but some are rare. Thus the one traditional bowed lute, the Kokyū, is of limited use; the *kugo* harp of court music fell into disuse over a millennium ago; and trumpets are now represented primarily by the *hora* conch of Buddhism.

The 20th century saw considerable experimentation with instrumental construction and composition, mostly under Western influence. Few recent innovations (e.g. the nine-hole *shakuhachi*, the bass *shamisen*, the 30-string *koto*) have caught on, but some will doubtless stand the test of time, as has the 17-string *koto*. A general trend towards pure instrumental composition and ensemble music is clearly due to Western impact. The phenomenon of large stick-drum (*taiko*) ensembles, which is gaining worldwide fame, is of recent vintage (*see* Kumi-daiko).

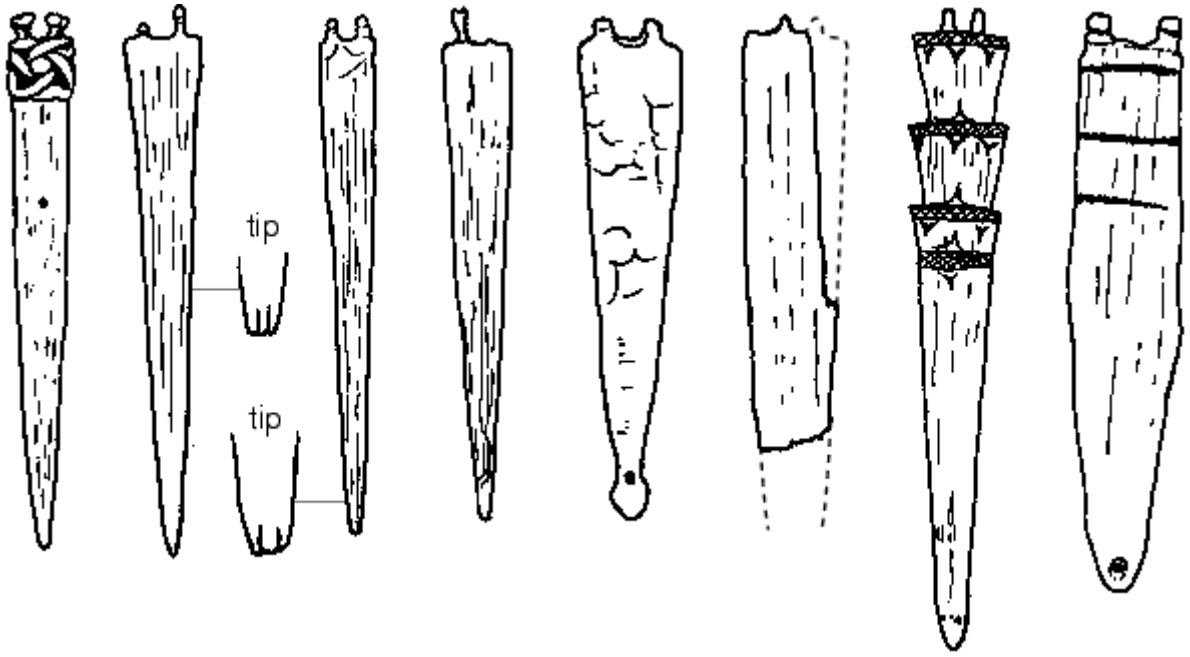
2. Archaeology

David W. Hughes

Dozens of court musical instruments of the 8th and 9th century are excellently preserved in the Shōsōin imperial storehouse in Nara. Most were gifts from the Chinese court, reflecting the major importation of élite Chinese culture at that time. Since Japan's historical era begins in the 8th century with the first written sources, knowledge of musical life before that time must depend largely on archaeology (see Hughes, 1988).

The people of the Jōmon period (*c*10,000–300 BCE) lived largely by hunting, fishing and foraging and had developed the art of pottery. Lacking written or iconographic evidence, we are often at a loss to know whether particular artefacts were intended as sound-producers. For example, dozens of pots with small holes around their rims have been suggested as possible drum bodies, the holes being used to affix a membrane with pegs or cord; however, numerous types of evidence eliminate this possibility, at least for most of the pots. More intriguing are the flattish hollow clay objects found from 2500 BCE onwards, mostly 8 to 15 cm long and often in stylized animal or human shapes. These often have a single hole on each surface but at opposite ends, suggesting orifices of the body. It is possible to blow into these, but it is not clear if they were intended as aerophones.

More convincing still are the objects in fig.1 , which are taken to be two-string zithers and date from the first five centuries BCE. Strings would have been tied to the tooth-like projections, but no strings or bridges survive. Most are 35 to 55 cm long. The overall shape of these zithers recalls the Ainu *tonkori* (see §VIII, 2 below) of historical times, the antecedents of which are unknown.



Two-string zithers from the 1st millennium bce

The ensuing Yayoi period (*c*300 BCE–300 CE) saw the beginning of metal-working. Only three instruments will be discussed in this article, all of which have Chinese antecedents but differ from them in ways that suggest native artisans struggling to imitate instruments they did not possess. All three are extremely varied in Japan, lacking standardization.

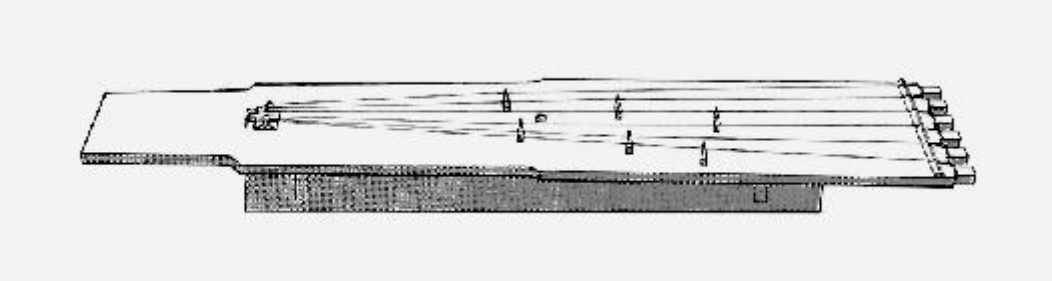
Dozens of egg-shaped ocarinas (*tsuchibue*, 'earthen flutes') clearly derive from the Chinese Xun but differ in having their more pointed end at the bottom, opposite the extremely wide blow-hole; they have four finger-holes on the front and two thumb-holes on the back, as opposed to more diverse arrangements in China. No safe conclusions about tuning can be drawn: a 15th-century Korean source notes that one must simply make a large number of ocarinas (*hun*) and then throw out the ones that are out of tune, so whether we have recovered the good ones or the bad remains uncertain. After this period, ocarinas disappear.

The Yayoi period has also yielded several hundred cast bronze bells known as *dōtaku*. These range in height from 20 to over 100 cm and can exceed 25 kg in weight. The cross-section is elliptical with pointed ends. There is no precise Chinese model for these. Early *dōtaku* seem suited for playing, but later ones were so fragile and decorous that they must have been intended only as art works or perhaps signs of political power, as they were often cached on remote hilltops near power centres. Several caches of a dozen or more bells have been found, but given the diversity of form and tuning within each cache, these were clearly not intended for actual playing as bell-chimes like the Chinese *bianzhong*. Oddly, *dōtaku* also disappear after this period.

The third Yayoi-period instrument of relevance, the Wagon, appears in mid-Yayoi and continues to the present. Now a six-string zither with movable tuning bridges, used to accompany indigenous court vocal music (*mi-kagura*; see §V, 2 below), it originally had either five or six strings. Prior to standardization as an elaborate, highly decorated instrument by the 9th century, several dozen diverse examples of actual instruments have been found, as well as clay funerary sculptures (*haniwa*) showing the instrument being played (see fig.2). In the earliest written sources, the word *koto* indicated this instrument; *wagon* is a later term, derived from two Chinese characters meaning 'Japanese zither'.

Indeed, native scholars claim it as Japan’s only indigenous string instrument. While its relationship to Chinese zithers with movable bridges is undeniable, each string is attached to a ‘tooth’, very much like those on the Jōmon two-string zithers but unlike any continental string attachment method. The following Kofun period (*c*300–710 CE) has yielded no important new instruments, but the *haniwa* funerary sculptures that date from this period at least confirm that the *wagon* was held on the lap, recalling somewhat the Korean *kayagŭm* rather than any current Japanese zither.

Drums and transverse flutes, which dominate folk ritual music today, are virtually absent prior to the 8th century, but drums are known from *haniwa* depictions, and both are known from poems presumed to be of Kofun-period date. All other major Japanese instruments were imported in or after the 8th century and subsequently indigenized.



Reconstruction of wagon found at Tsujibatake, Fukuoka Prefecture, ? 1st–2nd century CE; only the soundboard survives

3. ‘Biwa’

Hugh de Ferranti

The several forms of *biwa* introduced from the Asian continent by at least the 8th century are thought to have been of Central and South Asian origin. The Sino-Japanese characters for *biwa* are equivalent to the characters for the Chinese *pipa*, for whose etymology *see* Pipa. Many forms of *biwa* have existed, but common to the structure of all types are fretted necks, four or five strings, the use of variously shaped large plectra and relatively shallow soundboxes cut from the same piece of wood as the neck. Discussed here are the history of the instrument and schools; for construction and tunings *see* Biwa.

The *biwa* is important in the histories of both music and literature, for apart from its use in various repertories of *gagaku* and in new instrumental compositions, it has been played primarily in the context of musical recitation, that is, as accompaniment to oral narrative. As such the *biwa* was a vehicle for the development of a primary stream of narrative music (*katarimono*) in the Kamakura and Muromachi periods (roughly 13th–16th centuries), and gave impetus to the early forms of *jōruri*, the principal *katarimono* of the *bunraku* and *kabuki* theatres. The prominence of *biwa* narrative in the music culture of central Japan waned after the introduction of the *shamisen* in the late 16th century. During the early decades of the 20th century, however, the *satsuma-biwa* and *chikuzen-biwa* styles enjoyed nationwide popularity.

(i) Gaku-biwa and gogen-biwa

Since the late Heian period, the only lute that has been played in Japanese court music ensembles is the *gaku-biwa*, an instrument brought to Japan in the Nara period with the continental repertory of *gagaku*. The *gaku-biwa* is a large, four-string form of *pipa* first referred to in Chinese sources of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). A second *biwa* introduced at that time was the *gogen-biwa* (Chin. *wuxian pipa*), a five-string, straight-necked lute probably of Indian origin, first recorded as being played in China during the 6th century. A superb example of the *gogen-biwa* exists in the Shōsōin treasury at Nara. Although the *gogen-biwa* performance tradition did not continue beyond the 9th century, an 11th-century copy of a single scroll of notation for the *gogen-biwa* has survived (Nelson, 1986).

In Heian period élite society, both the *gaku-biwa* and the *gakusō* zither were instruments especially favoured by nobles and courtiers of both genders, and accounts of outstanding performers are given in literary works of the 10th to 14th centuries. During the Heian, Kamakura and Muromachi periods, the *gaku-biwa* was played not only in the standard *gagaku* ensemble, but also solo, in consort with one or more instruments, and in accompaniment to *saibara* songs. A corpus of stories about individually named instruments brought from Tang China and a tradition of secret techniques and compositions attest to the contemporary prestige of the courtly *biwa* repertory and its complex performing practice.

The principal modern contexts for *gaku-biwa* performance are as one of two string instruments in the *kangen* ensemble, and as one of a group of string, wind and percussion instruments that accompanies *saibara*. In these contexts the *gaku-biwa* is played so as to produce a sparse, slow-moving series of staggered cross-string strokes and isolated tones whose relation to the melodic wind parts of modern practice has a percussive aspect that belies its actual heterophony. The work of the Cambridge Tang music research group has shown, however, that the Heian and Kamakura forms of *tōgaku* melodies are represented most closely in the modern *gaku-biwa* and *shō* parts (see §V below).

(ii) Heike-biwa

One of the principal genres of Japanese music of the Kamakura and Muromachi eras is the narrative performance tradition now called *heikyoku* or *heike-biwa*.*Heikyoku* entails performance with *biwa* of individual stories or episodes from a corpus referred to as *Heike monogatari* (‘Tale of the Heike’), an account of the late 12th-century Genpei wars that is regarded as the paragon of Japanese medieval literature of the *katarimono* (narrative derived from an oral performance tradition) genre. The earliest stories appear to have been orally composed and circulated by blind, itinerant *biwa* players called *biwa hōshi*, who engaged in both secular and ritual performances of various kinds, including rites of appeasement (*chinkonsai*) for the spirits of warriors killed in battle. *Heike katari* (Heike recitation) may first have been performed to give solace to deceased Heike clan courtiers and samurai.

Although *Heike katari* remained a popular form of narrative performance until at least the late 16th century, by the early 14th century there existed multiple text versions associated variously with authors, scribes and *biwa* players. The significance of such texts for oral performance by blind professionals has yet to be sufficiently assessed, but the literary and performance traditions must be considered as complementary and mutually influential. A ‘performance-text’ (*kataribon*) of 1371 created under the supervision of the *biwa hōshi* Akashi no Kakuichi was treated as the source for printed, reading texts during the Edo period (1603–1868) and has long been acknowledged as the

definitive, standard form of the *Heike monogatari*. It remains unclear whether performing practice continued to involve oral compositional skills, as *kataribon* texts came to be circulated widely among performers.

The authority of the *shoku-yashiki* or Tōdō-za guild of blind professional musicians is an important consideration for any assessment of the performance tradition during the Muromachi and Edo periods. Established in the 14th century, the Tōdō-za secured patronage from the highest levels of feudal society. Among six principal schools recognized by the guild, only the Ichikata-ryū continued beyond the end of the Muromachi period. Governed by a *heike-biwa* player appointed with the approval of the Shogunate, the Tōdō-za guild acted as an administrative body that sought to regulate the activities of all blind musicians until 1871, when it was dissolved by the Meiji government.

By the early Edo period, *Heike katari* performance had ceased to be a popular art; it had become an élite tradition associated primarily with the upper strata of society, practised under direct patronage of the Shogunate, high-ranking samurai and Buddhist priests. Blind performers began to teach amateur enthusiasts, for whom they provided numerous fixed ‘text-scores’ (*fuhon*) such as the *Heike mabushi* of 1776, now acknowledged as an authoritative source by both blind and sighted practitioners. It was at this time that *Heike katari* came to be referred to as *heikyoku* (‘Heike music’). This terminology reflects changes in both the reception of the music and its relative textual and performative fluidity; what had been enjoyed as a unified narrative series presented over several hours came to be viewed as a sequence of discrete repertory items in which text and music were fixed and memorized.

The characteristics of modern *heikyoku* practice suggest its multiple layers of historical formation; each narrative episode (*ku*) is a patchwork of named vocal and instrumental pattern segments (*kyokusetsu* or *senritsukei*), each of which comprises a series of distinctive formulaic phrases interspersed with short introductory and intermediary *biwa* figures, suggesting an original oral compositional practice. Both the names and melodic character of many patterns suggest the influence of Kamakura-period *shōmyō* of the Tendai sect. While not aurally verifiable, some instrumental patterns may have been modelled on elements of the *gaku-biwa* solo repertory. The influence of Edo-period *koto* and *shamisen* musics is immediately audible in *miyako-bushi* tetrachordal formations (1–2♭–4) that are prevalent in many *kyokusetsu* segments.

In recent practice *heikyoku* has been maintained by two performance traditions based in Sendai and Nagoya. The Sendai tradition is referred to as the Tsugaru school, deriving from the practice of sighted amateurs who were vassals of the Tsugaru *daimyō*. It is now represented by Tokyo-based students of Tateyama Kōgo (1894–1989). Through use of the *Heike mabushi* text-score, Tsugaru school performers have had access to a repertory of all of the tale’s nearly 200 episodes. Performers of the Nagoya tradition have been blind professional musicians active as practitioners of both *heike-biwa* and Ikuta-ryū *koto*, *shamisen* and sometimes *kokyū*. They have maintained a repertory of eight *heikyoku* episodes. In the late 1990s, only one Nagoya school musician, Imai Tsutomu (*b* 1958), remained active as a performer.

Since the mid-1980s, some attempts have been made to refurbish the *heike-biwa* performing tradition and to build new audiences, both through modifications and arrangements of repertory items transmitted in the Tsugaru line and reconstructions of items no longer transmitted in the Nagoya line.

(iii) Mōsō-biwa and zatō-biwa

Several *biwa* performance traditions have been practised by blind males in south-western Japan. The most commonly used collective term for these practices is *mōsō-biwa* (‘blind priest *biwa*’), for the majority of *biwa* players in the region have been active in rites of local religious practice, and many have been certified as Buddhist priests. The term *zatō-biwa* has gained currency in the 1990s, however, as a means of historical distinction between those blind *biwa* players who were certified priests and men who had no such formal affiliation (zatō).

Affiliation among blind priests is a common institution within East Asian Buddhism. Korean sources include evidence of organizations of blind priests and *sūtra* texts nearly identical to forms transmitted in *mōsō* practice, but no substantial evidence for transmission to Japan of either texts or the practice of chanting *sūtra* s to the sound of *biwa* has yet been found. Reliable documentary histories held by the Japanese *mōsō* sects are all of Edo-period origin, but they record the following traditional accounts. *Jijinkyō*, *sūtra* s in praise of the earth deity Jijin, were first taught by Shaka (Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha) to a blind follower, then transmitted through China and Korea to Japan in the reign of Emperor Kinmei (539–71 CE). The efficacy of the *Jijinkyō* was such that groups of *mōsō* from diverse regions of Kyūshū were summoned to perform the *sūtra* in purification rites during the construction of the Tendai sect’s head temple, Enryakuji, in 785. Thereafter, *mōsō* temples with Tendai affiliation were established in all regions of Kyūshū, and *mōsō* groups were active at temples in the Kyoto and Nara regions during the Heian and Kamakura periods.

The regional styles of *mōsō-biwa* in Kyūshū have been administered by two Buddhist organizations, based in the northern and southern regions known until the Meiji period as Chikuzen and Satsuma. The Gensei Hōryū is based at the Jōjuin temple in Hakata and has authority over branch temples in Fukuoka, Yamaguchi, Ōita, Saga, Nagasaki and northern Miyazaki prefectures, while the Jōrakuin-Hōryū has been based at and administers temples in Kagoshima and southern Miyazaki prefectures. The former group claims as its founder Gensei (766–823 CE), a priest given the name Jōjuin after helping to build the Enryakuji. The founder of the Jōrakuin-Hōryū is said to have been Hōzan Kengyō, 19th head of the Kyoto *mōsō* tradition, who left Kyoto in 1196 to accompany Shimazu Tadahisa to his post as the first *daimyō* of Satsuma. Knowledge of the historical performance activities of both *mōsō* sects is scant, but in recent practice the primary rituals of both groups have been group ceremonies within the controlling temples and on seasonal household rites (*kaidan hōyō*) centred on exorcism of deities central to local belief, the earth spirit Jijin (the *Jijinbarai*) and various manifestations of Kōjin, the spirit of the hearth or oven (*Kōjinbarai* or *kamadobarai*). In formal group ceremonies of the Jojūin and Jōrakuin groups, the *mōsō* play *biwa* and chant sutras in ensemble, sometimes with the addition of flutes, drums and conch shells.

Many *mōsō* once performed secular *biwa* narratives to supplement their incomes and entertain people in the localities where household rites were conducted. Performance of secular narratives, called *kuzure* or *biwa gundan*, continued to be common among *mōsō* in northern Kyūshū until the early 20th century but was discouraged by the Gensei Hōryū organization. In remnant forms of that repertory, as also in the ritual repertory, the *biwa* is often played concurrently with the vocal chant, rather than in a punctuating role.

For *zatō*, lowly blind musicians who were unaffiliated with the *mōsō* sects, secular repertory has been a mainstay of livelihood. Despite their lack of Buddhist certification, *zatō* also learnt ritual texts for use in the *kamadobarai* and other exorcism rites, such as those for wells (*suijinbarai*) and for new houses and buildings (*watamashi*). Since at least the 1930s, however, the primary income of *zatō* came from engagement as performers of oral narrative on celebratory occasions (*zashiki-biwa*) and from performance on an itinerant basis (*kadobiki*). Since the 1950s *zatō* have been active only in central Kyūshū, in and around the former Higo province. The term *higo-biwa* was apparently devised in the last decade of the 19th century by enthusiasts of secular *biwa* narrative in central Kyūshū; it was used by few *biwa* players until the 1960s, whereafter it was propagated in academic writings and in the Education Ministry's 1973 designation of *higo-biwa* as an Intangible Cultural Property.

Most research on *zatō-biwa* has focussed on extensive tales called *danmono* (or in the case of some battle tales, *kuzure*).*Danmono* are narratives performed as one or more discrete sections (*dan*), each usually lasting at least 30 minutes. The *danmono* repertory includes chronicles of Kyūshū history, tales from the Heike narrative complex, and versions of legendary and historical stories that are the subjects of *sekkyō* recitations, *kōwaka*, *ningyō jōruri* and *kabuki* plays. Other *zatō-biwa* repertory includes relatively short pieces referred to as *hauta* and comic pieces known as *charimono*, *kerenmono* or *kokkeimono*.

(iv) Chikuzen-biwa and satsuma-biwa

These two styles of *biwa* narrative have been most widely practised throughout Japan since the late Meiji era (1868–1912); they bear the names of their respective regions of origin in northern and southern Kyūshū. In both styles, instrumental playing has been developed to a level of complexity beyond that found in the modern practice of other *biwa* styles. Since the 1960s a small repertory of new, purely instrumental compositions has been produced for five-string *chikuzen* and *satsuma* instruments (*see* Biwa).

Muromachi and early Edo period references suggest the presence of *heikyoku* performers in the Satsuma region, but the primary forms of *biwa* music were those of *mōsō* and *zatō* unaffiliated with the Tōdō-za. In the mid-16th century, the priest and philosopher Nisshinsai (Shimazu Tadayoshi, 1492–1568) composed poems on themes of morality, which are said to have first been performed by senior *mōsō* priests of the Jōrakuin temple. Traditional accounts also credit Nisshinsai and the 31st patriarch of the *mōsō* sect, Fuchiwaki Juchōin, with remodelling the *mōsō* instrument to make possible a style suiting the tastes of the Satsuma lord.

Edo-period sources distinguish the *shifū* style of samurai and high-ranking Satsuma *mōsō* (who were themselves of samurai families), the *zatō* style of blind professional musicians, and the *machifū* style of merchant-class *biwa* players who took up *biwa* performance as a pastime from the early 19th century. A style drawing on all three elements of Satsuma tradition was made known in Tokyo by prominent practitioners such as Nishi Kōkichi (1859–1931) and Yoshimizu Kinnō (1844–1910). From the 1890s, both newly composed and traditional narrative poetry for *biwa* gave voice to a nationalist fervour that glorified the martial code of the samurai. Attempts were soon made to modify *biwa* singing by incorporating elements of Edo *shamisen* song styles. Nagata Kinshin (1885–1927), who gained fame as a performer and recording artist in a new style, founded the Kinshin-ryū school in 1915. The older style of *satsuma-biwa* soon began to be distinguished from the Kinshin style by the term *seiha*, or 'orthodox

school’, and by the elaborate instrumental patterns that had been developed by Satsuma players. Suitō Kinjō (1911–73) supplemented aspects of Kinshin-ryū technique with her own innovations in founding the *nishiki-biwa* school in 1927, developing a five-string instrument with this name. Between 1910 and 1930, *satsuma-biwa* was widely enjoyed by young men and a smaller number of women, and its reception was as an art of the populace, rather than a classical tradition.

Although *satsuma-biwa* suffered neglect after World War II due to its prior associations with militarist ideology, some performers trained during the music’s heyday remained active as teachers and performers, including the *Seiha* performers Yoshimura Gakujō (1888–1953) and Fumon Yoshinori (*b* 1912), the Kinshin-ryū musician Enomoto Shisui (1892–1978), as well as Suitō Kinjō and Tsuruta Kinshi (1912–94). Tsuruta slightly remodelled the *nishiki-biwa* and gained international fame from the late 1960s through her collaborations with the composer Takemitsu in compositions such as *November Steps* and *Eclipse*.

The origins of *chikuzen-biwa* are in the practice of *mōsō-biwa* in the Chikuzen region. As part of the Meiji government’s attempts to bolster state Shintō at the expense of Buddhism, *mōsō* sects were banned during the 1870s. The man considered to have been the founder of the *chikuzen-biwa* tradition, Tachibana Chijō (1848–1919), was the sighted grandson of a senior *mōsō* in Hakata (Fukuoka), who had previously not been allowed to learn *biwa* because it had been considered an instrument solely for the blind. After making a study of *satsuma-biwa* instrumental techniques, he sought to develop a new narrative style that would appeal to a contemporary urban audience. During the late 1880s he worked to this end in collaboration with the geisha Yoshida Takeko and with Tsurusaki Kenjō, another sighted performer from a *mōsō* family. They devised new vocal melodies and sets of preludes and interludes for a remodelled version of a four-string *biwa* played by *mōsō*. The result was narrative music that could be performed as entertainment and that bore an elegance and subdued sensuality familiar to audiences of Edo *shamisen* music. The new style was introduced to Tokyo in the mid-1890s as *tsukushi-biwa*, but was called *chikuzen-biwa* from 1902.

Like *satsuma-biwa*, *chikuzen-biwa* was received as a popular narrative form. Considered more genteel than *shamisen* song styles associated with the geisha world, but more lyrical in both poetic and vocal style than *satsuma-biwa*, it attracted both female and male students. A differently tuned, five-string form of the instrument was developed so as to provide a much greater technical range, though the original four-string instrument continued to be common until the 1940s. The original Asahi-kai school, founded in 1909, divided in 1920 when the founder’s son-in-law, Tachibana Kyokusō, left to found the Tachibana-kai. Many of the style’s finest players joined Kyokusō, and the Tachibana-kai has since held the reputation of maintaining the genre’s highest artistic standards. The foremost *chikuzen-biwa* performer of the post-war period is Yamazaki Kyokusui (*b* 1906), a student of Kyokusō, who as a performer, teacher and composer has been a central figure in shaping the nature of modern practice. In 1995 she became the first *biwa* player to be named a ‘Living National Treasure’ by the Education Ministry.

The compositional activities of leading Asahi-kai musicians since 1945 have also broadened the expressive range of *chikuzen-biwa*. Of particular importance are the works of Tachibana Kyokuō III (1902–71) on themes from *nō* drama, which incorporate elements of *utai* singing. A modified style of *chikuzen-biwa* has been popularized since 1980 by Uehara Mari, daughter of the prominent Asahi-kai player Shibata Kyokudō. Uehara has attracted a substantial audience that is largely independent of that for more traditional styles of *biwa* music.

4. ‘Koto’

The Koto is the Japanese member of the family of long zithers with movable bridges found in several East Asian countries. The best-known members of the family are the Zheng and the *se* in China, the *kayagŭm* and the *Kŏmun’go* in Korea (*see* Kŏmun’go), the Đàn tranh in Vietnam and the Wagon and the *koto* in Japan. All these instruments probably originated in China with the possible exception of the *wagon*, which has been claimed to be indigenously Japanese. The exact date of the introduction of the *koto* into Japan is unknown but is generally assumed to have been at the beginning of the Nara period (710–84) or shortly before.

During the Nara and Heian (794–1185) periods the word ‘koto’, the original meaning of which is obscure, was applied to several types of string instruments, like the Sanskrit word ‘vīṇā’ in India. Examples were the *kin-no-koto* (the *shichigen-kin*, *kin* or Chinese *qin*); the *sō-no-koto* (the *sō* or *koto*); the *shitsu-no-koto* (the *shitsu*, or Chinese *se*); the *biwa-no-koto* (or *biwa*); the *yamato-goto* (or *wagon*); the *kudara-goto* (the harp, *kugo*); and the *shiragi-goto* (the Korean *kayagŭm*). Later the term came to be applied exclusively to the *sō-no-koto*. The *shitsu-no-koto*, *kudara-goto* and *shiragi-goto* are no longer used in Japan, while the names of two of the other instruments lost the suffix *-no-koto* to become simply *kin* and *biwa*, and the *yamato-goto* became *wagon*.

(i) Construction and performing practice

W. Adriaansz

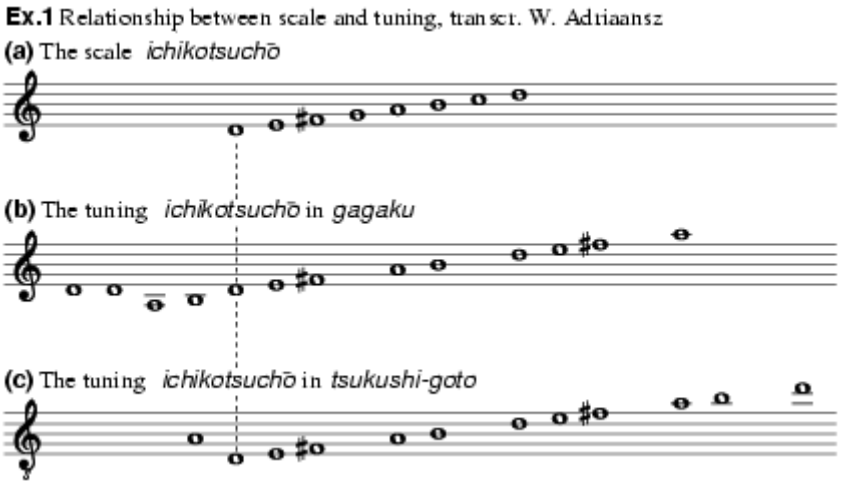
Although the *koto* has not undergone any essential changes since its introduction into Japan, several types can now be distinguished, depending on the musical genre or school in which they are used. The various types may be classified into four groups: *gakusō*, used in *gagaku* (court music); *tsukushisō*, the instruments of *tsukushi-goto* (the older tradition of *koto* music); *zokusō*, used in *zokusō* (the later tradition of *koto* music); and *shinsō*, the group of new *koto* types, many of which were invented by Miyagi Michio (1894–1956) and which are used in specially composed music. *Shinsō* include the *jūshichigen* (17-string bass *koto*) and the *tangoto* or ‘neo-koto’ or stand (a small *koto*, with strings tightened by pegs; the performer places it on a table and plays it sitting in a chair rather than kneeling on the floor).

The *koto* has a long (about 180–90 cm), slender (about 24 cm at the midpoint), rectangular body of *kiri* wood (Paulownia imperialis) with a slight convex longitudinal curve and larger lateral curve. There are 13 silk strings of equal length and thickness, stretched under equal tension over fixed bridges placed about 10 cm from the right end (as viewed by the player) and about 20 cm from the left end; nowadays stronger materials such as nylon and tetron are also used. The length of the vibrating part of the strings is determined by the placement of movable bridges (*ji*), each string having one bridge (for illustration of a *koto* bridge, *see*Bridge, fig.1*e)*. The *ji* are made of wood or ivory (plastic is used on cheap modern instruments). Different placements of the *ji* produce different tunings. Depending on the player’s school, the strings are plucked with bamboo, bone or ivory plectra (*tsume*) of varying shape.

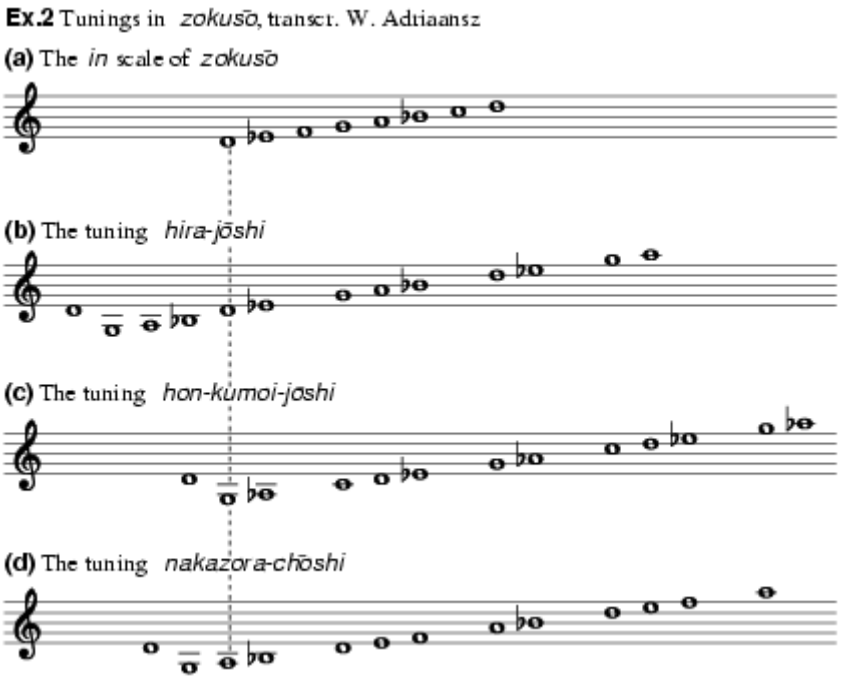
In all schools the player is behind the instrument, its right end slightly to his right. The player sits on the floor, cross-legged (in *gagaku* and Kyōgoku; see §(iv) below), kneeling (Ikuta and Yamada schools; see §(iii) below), or with one knee raised (traditionally in *tsukushi-goto*, although female players have now changed this ‘unfeminine’ position to a kneeling one). The Ikuta player kneels at an oblique angle,

facing slightly to the left; in all other schools the player is positioned at a right angle to the instrument. The *tsume* are worn on thumb, index finger and middle finger of the right hand, and pluck towards the palmar side of the hand. The main playing digit is the thumb, which plucks the strings in a movement directed away from the player. The main function of the left hand is to provide pitches not available on the open strings by pressing down on a string to the left of the movable bridge, raising the tension of the string and thereby the pitch. The left hand is additionally used to produce ornamental pitch inflections. Direct plucking of the strings with the left hand, although used today, occurred only rarely before the late 19th century.

The tuning of the *koto* depends on the scale system of the musical genre or composition for which the instrument is used. All traditional tunings consist of five pitches to an octave, representing the five most important notes of the mode. Additional pitches may be obtained by left-hand pressure to the left of the movable bridges. The tunings of the *koto* in *gagaku* and *tsukushi-goto* approximate to the requirements of the Pythagorean system; in *zokusō* this is true for the first, fourth and fifth degrees; the second and sixth degrees are somewhat lower. The exact ‘lowness’ of these latter pitches is not standardized: the ‘minor 2nds’ in the tuning produced by the more traditional musician vary, averaging about 75 cents, whereas more modern musicians tend to equate this interval with the Western tempered semitone of 100 cents. The relation between scale and tuning in *gagaku* and *tsukushi-goto* is shown in ex.1 ; *zokusō* is represented by its typical scale (the *in* scale) and its three most common tunings (ex.2). The location of the first degree of the scale is shown in the tuning patterns, which shows that the *zokusō* tunings are transpositions of the same scale, not (as is often thought) different modes.



Ex.1 Relationship between scale and tuning, transcr. W. Adriaansz



Ex.2 Tunings in zokusō, transcr. W. Adriaansz

(ii) Repertory and social context

W. Adriaansz

Although modern *sōkyoku* (‘*koto* music’, i.e. music in which the *koto* has a solo role) has developed in an unbroken line from *gagaku*-based traditions in the Heian period, the existing non-court repertory can be traced back no further than the last decades of the 16th century. Throughout the Edo period (1603–1868) *sōkyoku* was one of the most common genres, and it was only during the last years of the 19th century that increasing Westernization began gradually to transform the tradition. Two main subdivisions may be distinguished: *tsukushi-goto*, the older tradition, once the privilege of high social classes, with characteristics still close to those of older forms of ‘elegant music’; and the more recent *zokusō* (‘popular *koto* music’), limited to low-class professional musicians and the bourgeoisie. *Tsukushi-goto* is almost extinct, so *sōkyoku*, for all practical purposes, may be identified with *zokusō*.

The development *of zokusō* through several schools, as a typical product of the Edo period, reflects the social situation of the time, which, because of the country’s almost complete seclusion from the outside world, is considered to be one of the most specifically ‘Japanese’. The feudal system with its four-class structure is reflected in the direction of *sōkyoku* towards one specific social group, the bourgeoisie (mainly belonging to the merchant class, officially the lowest of the four classes); in the organization of *koto* and certain groups of *shamisen* players into a guild of professional blind musicians, the *shoku-yashiki*, which had a strictly organized system of professional ranks; and in the teacher–student relationship, which mirrored that of the lord–vassal. The combination of these factors resulted in an authoritarian system characterized by strong reciprocal obligations, which discouraged the development of individual initiative in younger musicians. This suppression of initiative, combined with the exclusion of potentially available talent by the practical limitation of professional *koto* musicians to blind men, is undoubtedly largely responsible for the striking homogeneity of the repertory of the various schools; to a lesser degree aesthetic considerations have also been responsible. Homogeneity eventually led to stagnation, which could be broken only by the emergence of a musician of exceptional

talent who might initiate a new style of composition and thereby a new school. This inevitable sequence (creation of a school–stagnation–eventual revolt and creation of a new school) was repeated several times during the Edo period. Disregarding sub-schools, three main *ryū* (schools) of *zokusō* were created and maintained in the Edo period: the Yatsuhashi-ryū, the Ikuta-ryū and the Yamada-ryū. Beginning in the Meiji period (1868–1912), gradual Westernization of *sōkyoku* led to innovations within the Ikuta- and Yamada-ryū, as well as to the formation of new schools.

The limitation of *sōkyoku* to the lower social strata was responsible for the almost total absence of contemporary scholarly writing on this subject. Because scholarly pursuit during the Edo period was primarily the concern of the higher classes (especially samurai), *zokusō* was rarely considered worthy of the attention of scholars. Contemporary publication in the field of *sōkyoku* was limited almost entirely to collections of song texts and, rather exceptionally, collections of tablatures. Among the latter, the most outstanding is the *Sōkyoku taiishō* (1799) by Yamada Shōkoku: this collection of *kumiuta* and *danmono* of the Ikuta school is preceded by the most scholarly introduction to the subject in the Edo period.

(iii) Schools

(a) Tsukushi-goto

During the last decades of the 16th century *tsukushi-goto* (named after a province in north-western Kyūshū) was created by a Buddhist priest, Kenjun (?1534–?1623), who established a new tradition, partly by selecting and arranging existing music and partly by composing new songs with *koto* accompaniment. Solo *koto* music of aristocratic origin had been played in northern Kyūshū since the end of the Heian period, and the growing political insecurity in Kyoto during the Kamakura (1192–1333) and Muromachi (1338–1573) periods led to increased cultural intercourse between the capital and south-western Honshū and northern Kyūshū, which were relatively safe. A popular pastime of the nobility during these periods was the improvisation of *imayō* (‘contemporary songs’). Such ‘noble *imayō*’ (distinct from ‘common *imayō*’; popular religious songs sung by the common people) often used the melody *Etenraku* as a vehicle for their poetry. Then, as now, *Etenraku* was one of the most popular compositions of *gagaku*. Such *etenraku-imayō* are the prototypes of the song cycles with *koto* accompaniment (*kumiuta*) of *tsukushi-goto*. *Fuki*, the oldest and most influential *kumiuta*, has been shown to be a direct descendant of such poetic improvisation on a section of the music of *Etenraku*. Besides aristocratic traditions, *zokkyoku* (‘popular music’) is said to be another source from which Kenjun drew. Its influence, however, was considerably less, and in the new arrangements the original character was lost. A third influence on *tsukushi-goto*, that of Chinese *qin* music, is often mentioned; so far, however, research has not established any relationship between them.

The most important part of the *tsukushi-goto* repertory consists of ten *kumiuta* by Kenjun. Normally the texts of these cycles were taken from old sources of high literary quality. It is typical of *kumiuta* that the poems of the individual songs (*uta*) were not related to one another. The musical structure of each *uta* tends to be strictly quadratic: eight phrases, each containing four bars in duple metre, already found in *tsukushi-goto*, later became standard in *zokusō kumiuta*.

Throughout the Edo period *tsukushi-goto* remained primarily the privilege of Buddhist priests and Confucian scholars, who respectfully preserved the aristocratic, ceremonial character of the music as originally established by Kenjun. Especially after the time of Genjo (*d* 1649), the second head of the school, restrictions were severe. Blind men – the professional musicians – and women were banned from instruction. Stylistic development within the school was minimal, and this, combined with the general aloofness of *tsukushi-goto*, caused stagnation. A serious decline began in the late 19th century with the rapid modernization of Japan. Today the school is almost extinct, and it is no longer possible to acquire sufficiently reliable information for scholarly research because the scores are incomplete and no performers of professional standard are still alive.

(b) Yatsuhashi-ryū

W. Adriaansz

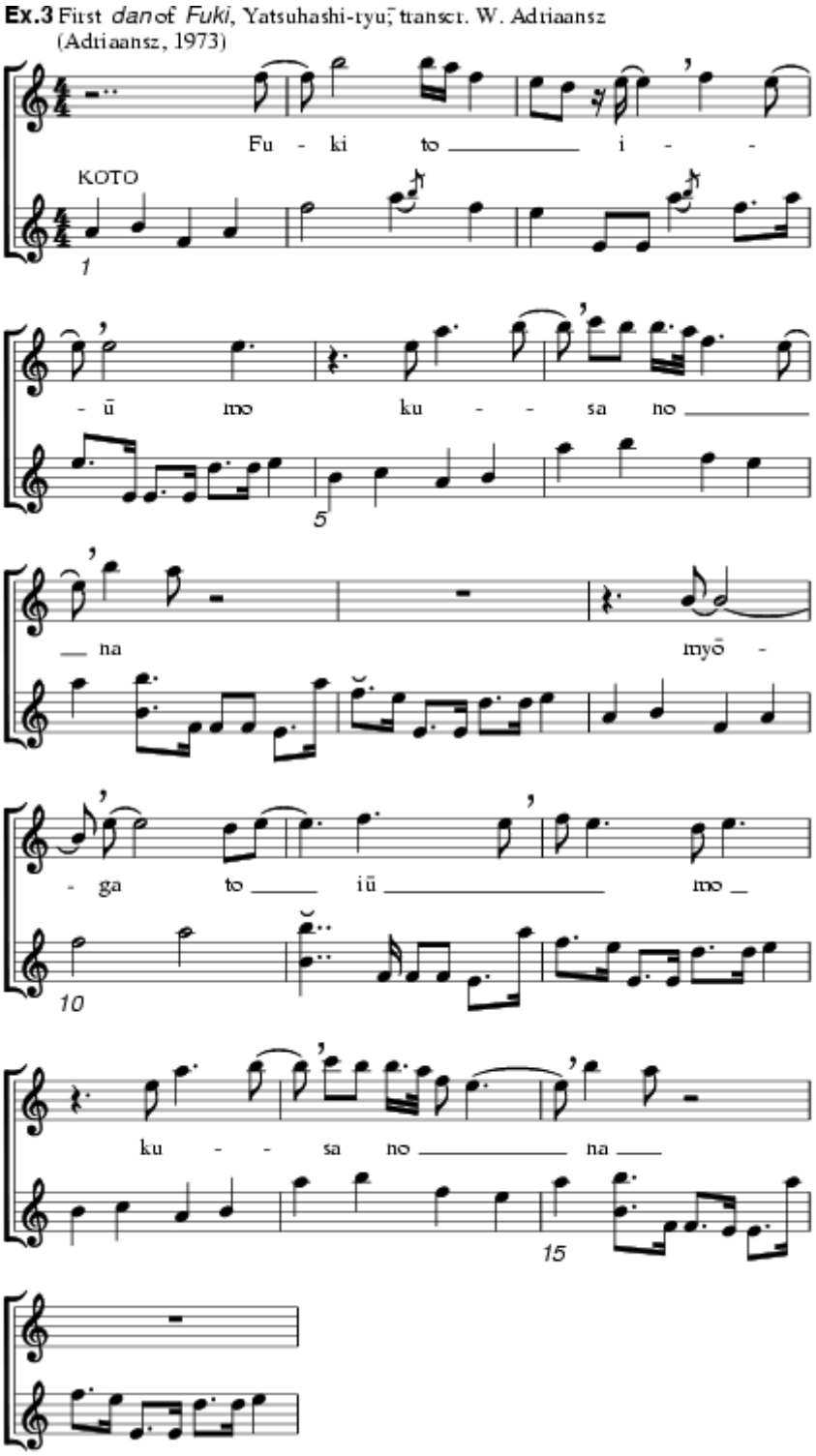
Towards the middle of the 17th century Hōsui, a musician of *tsukushi-goto*, settled in Edo where he taught a blind *shamisen* virtuoso, Jōhide (1614–85). Later known as Yatsuhashi and given the title Kengyō, this blind musician became the founder of *zokusō*, a step considered of such importance that he is commonly regarded as the father of modern *koto* music. Yatsuhashi Kengyō was responsible for the formation of a small repertory of 13 *kumiuta* and, possibly, two *danmono* or *shirabemono* (compositions for solo *koto*, consisting of several *dan* – sections – each of which contains 104 beats). The *kumiuta* and the *danmono* are in part arrangements of compositions of *tsukushi-goto* and in part newly composed. Yatsuhashi made a revolutionary innovation by using the popular *in* scale rather than the scales of *tsukushi-goto*. This modal change was of great importance: with it the music began to move away from older aristocratic traditions, including *tsukushi-goto*, towards more modern, popular idioms represented, for example, by *shamisen* music. This again caused a shift in social milieu and, beginning with the activities of Yatsuhashi Kengyō, *koto* music became the concern of professional musicians and of a bourgeoisie well-educated in artistic matters. The use of the rather unflattering term *zokusō* is justified by this shift in social milieu and to a lesser degree by a shift in function from spiritually inclined ceremony to secular entertainment; it is not justified by the quality of the music, which, though it was adapted to professional technical standards, did not lose its restrained aristocratic character.

The repertory of the Yatsuhashi-ryū contains 13 *kumiuta* traditionally ascribed to Yatsuhashi Kengyō, one *kumiuta* by Yatsuhashi's student Kitajima Kengyō (*d* 1690) and prototypes of two *danmono*. Ten of Yatsuhashi's *kumiuta* and the one by Kitajima follow the standard form in the construction of the individual *uta*: eight phrases of four bars in duple metre. The remaining three (the most venerated ones, collectively called *Yatsuhashi no sankyoku*, 'Yatsuhashi's three pieces') show freer construction. The two *danmono*, *Kudan* and *Rinzetsu*, are prototypes of compositions that, in slightly altered form, later became two of the most famous pieces of *koto* music: *Rokudan* and *Midare*.

The first song of the most typical *kumiuta*, *Fuki*, demonstrates the characteristic features of *kumiuta* (ex.3). Form and content are directly related to the first part of the *gagaku* composition *Etenraku*. In this *uta* the beginning of each four-bar phrase is marked by an ornamented octave pattern (the octave is on the third beat of the first and the first beat of the second bar of each phrase); in addition, equally standardized figures occur at the conclusion of several phrases (bars 4, 8, 12 and 16). The third and fourth phrases are slightly varied repetitions of the first and second. The eight phrases of the first 32

bars can be divided into three groups: phrases 1–4 (bars 1–16: ex.3), phrases 5 and 6 (bars 17–24) and phrases 7 and 8 (bars 25–32). The first group is characterized by the use of a high register and great stability (all phrases end on E, the first degree of the mode); the second group moves in a middle register and is less stable (phrases end on fifth and first degrees); the third group uses the lowest register and is relaxed in quality, reaching a conclusion on the first degree in bar 31. The last bar and a half of the *koto* part, ending on the fifth, is a characteristic short interlude between *uta*; it never occurs at the conclusion of the final *uta*, which normally ends on the first degree in both voice and *koto* parts.

The three parts reflect the *jo-ha-kyū* concept. A rough translation of these three terms might be ‘prelude’ or ‘introduction’ (*jo*), ‘breaking away’ (*ha*) and ‘rapid’ or ‘hurried’ (*kyū*). They always appear in this order, although some compositions may use only two of the three kinds of movement. The basic concept in this type of organization is to place slow-moving pieces before pieces that have more movement, and to end with pieces that are called ‘rapid’. This regular quadratic structure, the grouping of the phrases into three groups following the *jo-ha-kyū* order and the descending tendency throughout the *uta* can be seen throughout the *kumiuta* repertory. Because voice and *koto* simultaneously realize an individual, idiomatic version of the same underlying melody, their parts are closely related; occasional dissonances are the result of melodic activity and have no harmonic function. The temporal relationship between voice and *koto* is rather complex: whereas the *koto* tends to play on the beats, the voice frequently falls between the beats, often resulting in a characteristic lagging effect. The tempo of the first *uta* of a *kumiuta* is always slow (M.M. crotchet = *c*42). Virtuosity has no place in this form.



Ex.3 First dan of Fuki, Yatsuhashi-ryū; transcr. W. Adriaansz

As with *tsukushi-goto*, the repertory of the Yatsuhashi-ryū remained stagnant. The school flourished throughout the Edo period, after which it gradually declined. Through the activities of Sanada Shin (1883–1975), for a time the sole carrier of the tradition, there was a minor renaissance in the 1960s. The tradition has been preserved in a sufficiently reliable state to make responsible scholarly study possible.

(c) Koto music in Ryūkyū

Robin Thompson

Supplementing its role as an accompanying instrument in Ryukuan classical and folk music, in which it plays a role subsidiary to the *sanshin*, the Ryukyuan *koto* possesses a small but distinctive solo repertory of its own, consisting of instrumental pieces and songs, all with Japanese associations. The instrumental repertory consists of five *sugagaki* pieces (*Takiotoshi sugagaki*, *Ji sugagaki*, *Edo sugagaki*, *Hyōshi sugagaki*, *San'ya sugagaki*) and two *danmono* (*Rokudan, Shichidan*). The vocal repertory comprises three songs (*Genji-bushi*, *Tsushima-bushi*, *Sentō-bushi*).

The *koto* is thought to have been introduced into Ryūkyū in 1702 by Inamine Seijun, who had studied Yatsuhashi-ryū in Satsuma. The *sugagaki* items he introduced on his return to Ryūkyū are short pieces for unaccompanied *koto* no longer extant in Japan. However, the titles of several appear in materials such as the Japanese *koto* primer *Ōnusa* (1699) and are thus known once to have been performed in Japan. *Rokudan* ('six sections') and *Sachichidan* ('seven sections') are similar to the Japanese versions of these two *danmono*, the main difference lying in the use of the anhemitonic pentatonic scale in the Ryukyuan version and the hemitonic pentatonic scale in the Japanese versions. Since Inamine Seijun studied the Yatsuhashi-ryū and not the Tsukushi-ryū, with which the anhemitonic pentatonic scale is associated in *zokusō* styles, and since composition of the *danmono* is attributed to Yatsuhashi Kengyō, the Ryukyuan versions are thought to reflect an early stage of development of the *danmono* within the Yatsuhashi-ryū, prior to their adaptation to the later anhemitonic pentatonic scale.

The three *koto* songs employ variants of Japanese texts contained in anthologies of *ofunauta*, songs to pray for safety at sea. Their titles and musical style also suggest a Japanese provenance, although no pieces with these names are known to have existed in Japanese music. They may, however, be the sole surviving remnants of the *ofunauta* musical tradition, which is thought to stretch back to the Heian period.

The earliest notation for the Ryukyuan *koto* is contained in the two-volume *Koto kuroronshī* compiled by Tedokon Junkan in 1895. This contains the ten items of the solo repertory together with the accompanying *koto* parts of a further 42 pieces from the *sanshin* repertory. The three-volume edition currently in use was compiled in 1940 and consists of 193 pieces.

(d) Ikuta-ryū

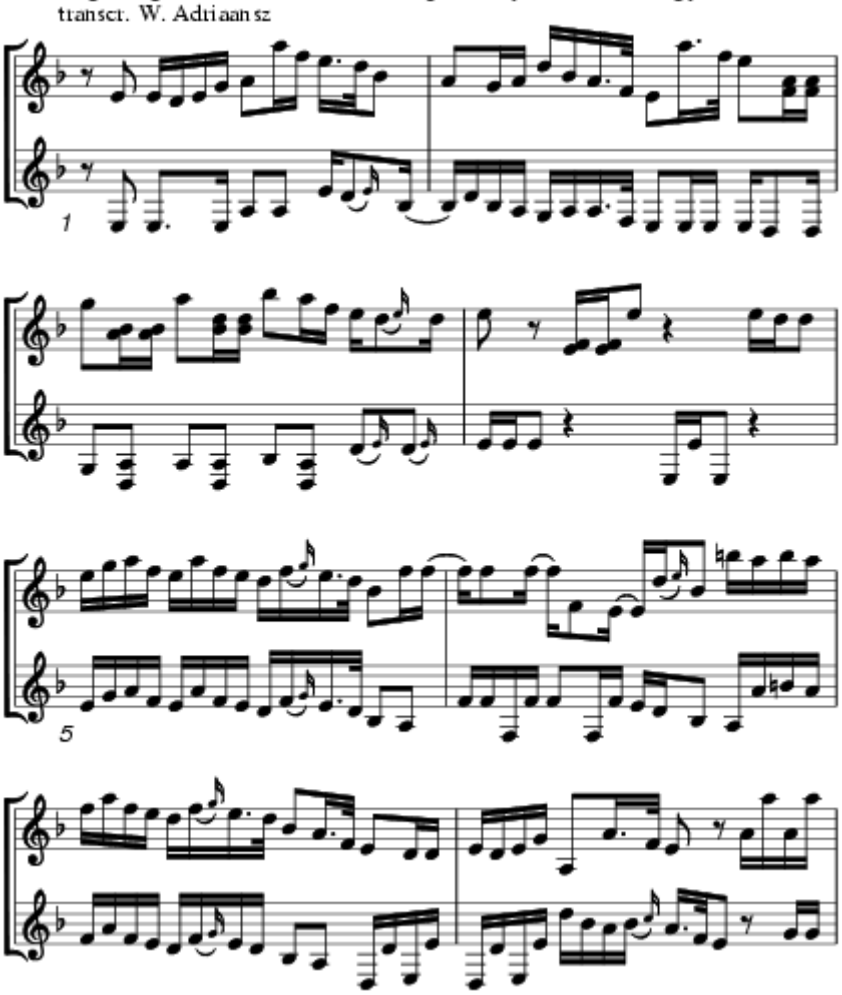
W. Adriaansz

The music of the Yatsuhashi-ryū and of *tsukushi-goto* was so firmly rooted in aristocratic musical traditions that it soon lost contact with the developing bourgeois culture of the 17th century. By the Genroku period (1688–1704), when the new culture was fully developed, *kumiuta* offered little more than historical interest. In contrast to the somewhat formal *koto*, with its highly respected tradition acting as a brake on stylistic development, the more popular *shamisen*, unburdened by such venerable traditions, had succeeded in keeping abreast of the changing times. In 1695 Ikuta Kengyō (1656–1715) founded a new school in Kyoto that established close collaboration between the *koto* and the *shamisen* in the performance of *jiuta*. In doing so, he opened the door to new developments in *koto* music. In this context the term *jiuta* ('regional songs', i.e. songs from the Kyoto–Osaka area) refers to predominantly lyrical songs composed to contemporary texts in a flexible musical form. *Jiuta* were originally sung with *shamisen* accompaniment. In the Ikuta-ryū the *shamisen* could be replaced by the *koto*, although the combination of *koto* and *shamisen* was more common. It is typical of the Ikuta-ryū that in such ensembles the leading musician plays the *shamisen*, not the *koto*.

Jiuta composers were greatly interested in instrumental techniques. This interest eventually led to new forms as the musical interludes (*ai-no-te*) were gradually extended until they were frequently longer than the sung parts. These long *ai-no-te* were called *tegoto*, and the form in which they occurred was *tegotomono*. This development assumed its definitive shape in Osaka around the Kansei period (1789–1801) in the works of Minezaki Kōtō. Basically the *tegotomono form*, which occurs in many variants, consists of three parts: *mae-uta* (‘fore-song’), *tegoto* and *ato-uta* (‘after-song’).

The relationship between the *shamisen* and the *koto* gradually changed from the almost complete dependence of the *koto* on the *shamisen* in the earlier *jiuta* to an increasing independence of the two instruments. When *koto* and *shamisen* play equally important, although interdependent parts, one speaks of *kaete-shiki sōkyoku*.*Kaete* refers to an ornamental version, added to the original part, called *honte*. This development, although begun in Osaka during the Bunka period (1804–18) in the compositions of Ichiura Kengyō, reached the peak of its development in Kyoto, especially in the works of Yaezaki Kengyō (*d* 1848), where such compositions were called *kyōmono*. Yaezaki’s strength lay in his virtuoso arrangements as *kaete-shiki sōkyoku* of *shamisen* compositions by other composers, especially Matsuura Kengyō (*d* 1822) and Kikuoka Kengyō (1792–1847). The development of instrumental virtuosity can be seen in the beginning of the fifth *dan* of *Godan ginuta* (ex.4), a composition for two *koto* by Mitsuzaki Kengyō (*d* 1853). As in most traditional Japanese music, its two parts are closely related. A characteristic feature of 19th-century combinations of a *koto* pair (or *koto* and *shamisen*) is the occasional rapid alternation of short motifs between the two instruments, as in the fourth bar.

Ex.4 Beginning of the fifth *dan*, *Godan ginuta* by Mitsuzaki Kengyo; transcr. W. Adriaansz



Ex.4 Beginning of the fifth dan,Godan ginuta by Mitsuzaki Kengyō; transcr. W. Adriaansz

In the middle of the 19th century a reaction against the strongly *shamisen*-dominated *sōkyoku* resulted in a neo-classical movement that attempted to revive pure *koto* music. Inspiration was sought in the old *kumiuta*. The most important composers in this movement were Mitsuzaki Kengyō in Kyoto, best known in this connection for *Akikaze no kyoku* (a *danmono* followed by a *kumiuta*, both conforming strictly to the old forms); and Yoshizawa Kengyō (*d* 1872) in Nagoya, the composer of the *Kokingumi*, in which *kumiuta* have been used as stylistic examples without their structures being followed.

The repertory of the Ikuta-ryū was not limited to new types of composition but also incorporated the *kumiuta* and *danmono* from the Yatsuhashi-ryū. For this purpose *kumiuta* and *danmono* were subjected to a final polishing process, in the course of which all compositions were made to adhere to strict structural schemes. As the structure of three of Yatsuhashi's *kumiuta* deviated too markedly from the norm, they were replaced by new compositions but retained the old texts. They continued to be referred to as *Yatsuhashi no sankyoku*, however, and remained the object of the same veneration as the original compositions. The musician responsible for this final adaptation was Kitajima Kengyō. Later *kumiuta* composed within the Ikuta-ryū, mainly by Mitsuhashi Kengyō (*d* 1760), usually follow the standard form.

(e) Yamada-ryū

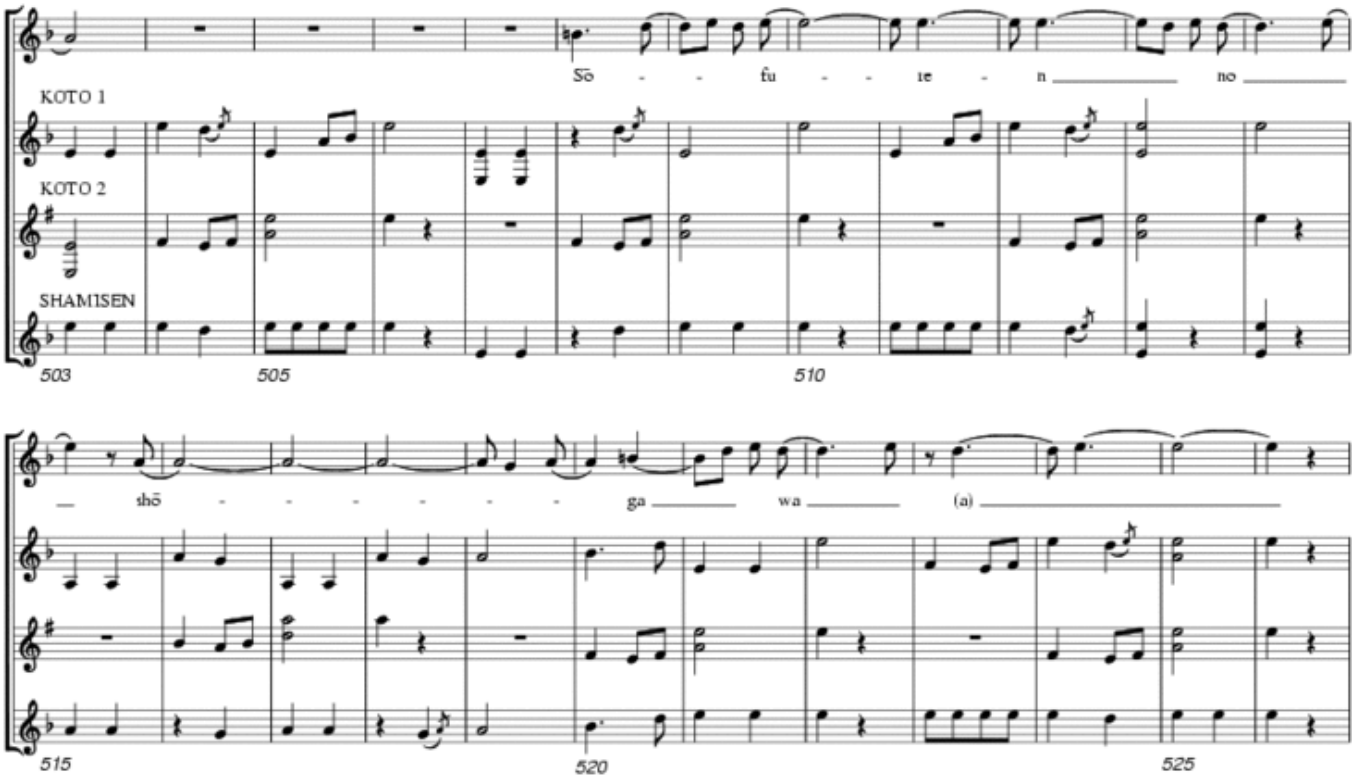
W. Adriaansz

The Ikuta-ryū remained chiefly confined to the Kansai (Kyoto–Osaka) area. Attempts during the 18th century to export the school to Edo met with little success, partly because the repertory of the city still consisted largely of the, by then, thoroughly old-fashioned *kumiuta* and partly because the modern *jiuta* were so typical of the Kansai area that they did not appeal to the taste of Edo. Only at the end of the 18th century did Edo acquire its own school of *koto* music, the Yamada-ryū, named after its creator, Yamada Kengyō (1757–1817). A remarkable parallel between the creation of the Ikuta-ryū in Kyoto in the late 17th century and the Yamada-ryū in Edo a century later is that both schools adopted modern styles by absorbing features of certain *shamisen* styles. A significant difference, however, is that in this process the Ikuta-ryū sought inspiration in lyrical, the Yamada-ryū in narrative and dramatic *shamisen* (and other) styles (*katō-bushi*, *itchū-bushi*, *tomimoto-bushi* among the *shamisen* styles; *yōkyoku* of the *nō* theatre; and *heikyoku*, epic poetry with *biwa* accompaniment). Another typical difference between the two schools is the relative importance of the performing instruments. In the Ikuta-ryū the *shamisen* is the main instrument, played by the leading musician of the group; in the Yamada-ryū, which also combines the *koto* and the *shamisen*, the main function is assigned to the *koto*, the *shamisen* having no more than an obbligato part.

The Yamada-ryū repertory contains a selection of *kumiuta* and *danmono*; *saku-uta*, including Yamada Kengyō's own compositions; *shin saku-uta*, with all works other than *kumiuta*, *saku-uta*, *tegotomono* and *shin sōkyoku* ('new *koto* music'); *tegotomono*, a small group with a few compositions adapted from the Ikuta-ryū, as well as some composed within the Yamada-ryū; and *jōrurimono*, arrangements from narrative *shamisen* literature, such as *katō-bushi* and *tomimoto-bushi*.

The beginning of the section *gaku* from *Kogō no kyoku* by Yamada Kengyō (ex.5) illustrates the combination of tradition and original elements, a typical technique of this composer. *Gaku* refers to reminiscences of *gagaku*, which are prompted by the text. Because such allusions are not made by mere imitation, the result is an interesting combination of *gagaku* and *zokusō* styles. The *gagaku* element is strongest in the second *koto* part, which consistently plays four-bar phrases consisting of *gagaku*-based octave patterns (e.g. bars 504–5) and single notes (e.g. bar 506). This may be compared with similar *gagaku*-inspired phrases in *kumiuta* (see ex.3 above). In spite of the four-bar phrases in the second *koto* part, however, the actual structure of the *gaku* section does not produce the effect of a similarly predictable, regular quadratic structure. The *gagaku* element in the second *koto* part requires a tuning providing major 2nds and minor 3rds. Thus the notes used in bars 503–26 are *e*′, *f*♯′, *a*′, *b*′ and *d*″; after the instrument is retuned in bar 527 (retuning never occurs during a true *gagaku* composition), these become *e*′, *g*′, *a*′, *b*′ and *d*″. The voice is ambiguous in its allegiances: it joins the second *koto* in using anhemitonic pentatonic material; structurally, however, it aligns itself with the first *koto* and the *shamisen*, which remain completely in the *zokusō* sphere, as shown by the frequent occurrence of minor 2nds and major 3rds. The simultaneous use of *gagaku* and *zokusō* elements results in different key signatures, which here indicate the simultaneous use of two different modes, built on the same tonic, E.

Ex.5 Beginning of the *gaku* section of *Kogō no kyoku* by Yamada Kengyo, transcr. W. Adriaansz



Ex.5 Beginning of the gaku section of Kogō no kyoku by Yamada Kengyō, transcr. W. Adriaansz

The Yamada-ryū is as typical of the Kantō area (Edo and surroundings) as the Ikuta-ryū is of Kansai. The most significant composers in the Yamada-ryū were Yamada Kengyō and three of his pupils: Yamato Kengyō, Yamaki Kengyō and Yamase Kengyō.

(iv) Innovations since the Meiji era (1868–1912)

W. Adriaansz, revised by David W. Hughes

In the last decade of the 19th century *sankyoku* (‘music for three’) became especially popular: this was a performing practice in which a third instrument was added to the usual ensemble of *koto* and *shamisen*. Earlier this third instrument had often been the *kokyū* (spike fiddle), but it was gradually replaced by the *shakuhachi* (end-blown flute); it plays another variant of the existing melody. Since then the Yamada and Ikuta schools have continued to flourish, transmitting their traditional repertories.

At the same time, the *koto* proved to be a favoured instrument for experimentation with combinations of traditional Japanese and Western music. Within *sōkyoku* the initial changes were slight and involved modest experimentation with different modes and an increased use of left-hand plucking, which created harmony-like effects. Contrasting with this *Meiji shinkyoku* (‘new music of the Meiji period’), which flourished mainly in Osaka, was the response to Western music of Suzuki Koson (1875–1931) in Kyoto around 1900; he attempted in his works to combine modern poetry and romantic feeling with classic practices of the Heian period. His school, called Kyōgoku, commanded attention for a short time but declined rapidly. More drastic Westernization was accomplished by the *koto* musician Miyagi Michio: this included composition of chamber music for Japanese instruments, orchestral use of Japanese instruments, combination of Japanese and Western instruments and invention of new instruments, notably the 17-string bass *koto* (*jūshichigen*). Miyagi’s influence and historical importance were, and continue to be, very strong.

More recent initiatives have sprung particularly from Japanese trained in or influenced by Western music (see IX, 1 below). Miyagi’s 17-string *koto*, aside from also becoming a solo instrument in recent decades, has been followed by others with extra strings (called by scholars *tagensō*, ‘many-string *koto*’). The ‘20-string *koto*’ (*nijūgen* (*-sō*)), devised by the performer Nosaka Keiko and the composer Miki Minoru in 1969, added a 21st string almost immediately and in 1991 spawned a variant with 25 strings as compositional demands expanded. The ‘30-string *koto*’ (*sanjūgen* (*-sō*)) has been championed mainly by the performer and composer Miyashita Susumu. Composers for these instruments experiment with various tunings but generally use the extra strings to ‘fill the gaps’ in the traditional pentatonic tunings.

Unlike traditional works for the *koto*, most works written for these new *koto* are by specialist composers rather than *koto* players, and may demand a virtuosity that exceeds the grasp of all but the most skilled performers. New compositions for the standard 13-string instrument also flourish. All kinds of *koto* are now combined with a wide range of other instruments, Japanese or otherwise.

The ‘neo-koto’, dating from 1995, is basically a traditional *koto* made more convenient by shortening the body by a third, adding guitar-like tuning pegs and colouring certain strings for orientation.

(v) One- and two-string koto

Charles Rowe

Unlike the 13- and 17-string *koto (sō)*, the smaller one- and two-string *koto* (*ichigen-kin*, *nigen-kin*) do not have movable bridges (*ji*), and thus belong to the same class of instruments as the Chinese *qin*.

The single-string *ichigen-kin* (also called *suma-goto* or *hankin*) seems to have been invented (or, according to some, introduced from China) in the late 17th century and appears to have been modelled on the *qin*. As the name *hankin* (‘board zither’) suggests, the original type has a body consisting of a single board, with two slight ‘waists’ as on the *qin*, although recently instruments have come to be made with a hollowed-out body and a flat backboard. The instrument is approximately 110 cm long and 10 cm wide and is set on a stand approximately 25 cm from the ground. The silk string passes over a bridge at the player’s right and is attached directly to the vertical tuning peg at the left. Twelve position markers, covering a compass of two octaves, are set into the face of the instrument. The player obtains different pitches by touching the string lightly with a diagonally truncated bamboo or ivory cylinder worn on the left middle finger, and plucks the string with a similar but shorter cylinder worn on the index finger of the right hand. Frequent use is made of the delicate portamento technique made possible by the left-hand cylinder.

An early revival of the *ichigen-kin* was brought about by the Buddhist priest Kakuhō (1729–1815), but the music of the *ichigen-kin* as it is now performed is largely the result of the activities of Manabe Toyohira (1809–99). Of the so-called *kokyoku* (‘old songs’), only two have survived, and many of the songs in the present-day repertory are Toyohira’s own compositions. The *ichigen-kin* is typically played by a solo performer who both sings and plays. Opportunities for hearing this music today are rare, but traditions of *ichigen-kin* performance, all tracing their origins to Toyohira, are to be found in Kōchi, Kyoto, Tokyo and Suma.

There are two types of two-string zither in Japan, together known as *nigen-kin*: the *yakumo-goto* and the *azuma-ryū nigen-kin*. The *yakumo-goto* is said to have been invented in 1820 at Izumo shrine by Nakayama Kotonushi (1803–80), but it seems that the *koto* and *shamisen* player Kuzuhara Kōtō (1812–82) also played a part in its development. Kotonushi, it is said, made the first instrument from a half-tube of bamboo, and although later instruments are made of paulownia wood, three grooves are carved into the surface to represent the nodes of the original bamboo instrument. Approximately the same size as the *ichigen-kin*, the *yakumo-goto* has a convex upper board and a flat backboard that extends beyond the upper board to the player’s left and holds the two tuning pegs. The *yakumo-goto* does not have the two waists that characterize both the *ichigen-kin* and the *qin*. The strings pass through separate holes to the surface and over two bridges before passing down through a common hole at the left-hand end to the tuning pegs. Either 30 or 31 position markers cover a compass of three octaves. The player stops the strings with a cylinder worn on the left middle finger and plucks them with a plectrum worn on the right index finger; these are similar to those used by the *ichigen-kin* player. The instrument rests on a stand approximately 20 cm above the floor. Tassels decorate both instrument and stand. The strings are tuned in unison, and the playing technique is similar to that of the *ichigen-kin*. A characteristic of *yakumo-goto* performance is that the left-hand cylinder is not released from the strings except to play the lowest (open-string) note, and therefore a light portamento effect is heard throughout.

As with the single-string instrument, the *yakumo-goto* is typically played by a solo performer. A number of songs do, however, contain extended instrumental passages (*tegoto*), for which there exist ornamental parts (*kaete*) for a second *yakumo-goto*. For a time the *yakumo-goto* enjoyed considerable popularity in western Japan, for both sacred and secular use, but today it is little heard outside a few religious establishments, notably the ‘new religion’ Ōmoto (see §IV, 5), where it has provided liturgical music since 1909.

The *azuma-ryū nigen-kin* (‘eastern school two-string zither’) was developed from the *yakumo-goto* in Tokyo around 1870 by the *kabuki* drummer Tōsha Rosen (1830–89), and rapidly overtook the *yakumo-goto* in popularity in that city. The main difference between the *yakumo-goto* and the *azuma-ryū nigen-kin* is the absence in the latter of the flat backboard of the *yakumo-goto*. Rosen published a book of his own compositions for *azuma-ryū nigen-kin* in 1885. Free of the religious interdictions laid down by Kotonushi for the *yakumo-goto*, the *azuma-ryū nigen-kin* has been used as a solo instrument, in offstage *kabuki* music and in ensemble with other instruments.

5. ‘Shakuhachi’

Donald P. Berger, revised by David W. Hughes

The modern standard version of this end-blown Notched flute of Japan has four finger-holes and one thumb-hole. Originally imported from China by the early 8th century, it reappeared around the 15th century in a Japanized form and has since come to be used in several quite diverse types of music: meditative solos, small ensemble pieces, folksong and modern works by both native and foreign composers. The impressive range of the *shakuhachi*’s sound potential has been well described by Malm (1959): ‘From a whispering, reedy *piano*, the sound swells to a ringing metallic *forte* only to sink back into a cotton-wrapped softness, ending with an almost inaudible grace note, seemingly an afterthought’.

The fundamental pitches of the standard-size instrument (54·5 cm) are approximately *d′–f′–g′–a′–c″*; a skilful player can cover about three octaves, although traditional pieces rarely exceed two octaves and a fourth. Pitches in between the basic ones are produced by a combination of part-holing and embouchure. The *shakuhachi* is manufactured in a graduated series of sizes a semitone apart; the size used depends on the genre, the other performers (if any) and the personal preference of the player (see §(v) below). Women have rarely played the *shakuhachi* in recent centuries, although they commonly played its ancestor in China. There are sociological, symbolic and musical reasons for this virtual taboo, all of which are being overcome in modern Japan.

(i) Early history

The direct ancestor of the modern *shakuhachi* is the so-called *fuke-shakuhachi*, the instrument of the Fuke sect of Zen Buddhism. By the early 18th century at the latest it was clearly distinguishable from previous *shakuhachi* types, and it has continued to evolve up to the present. The history of the *shakuhachi* begins, however, much earlier. The Chinese end-blown flute *chiba* (*see* Xiao) was imported to Japan by the early 8th century as part of the orchestra for *gagaku* (court music); *shakuhachi* is the Japanese pronunciation of the ideograms for *chiba*. The name was derived from the length of the basic instrument: 1 *chi/shaku* and eight-tenths (*ba/hachi*) of another, i.e. 1·8 *shaku*. This term soon came to designate all sizes of the instrument.

Japanese scholars call this earliest version the ‘archaic’ (*kodai*)*shakuhachi*. Eight of these instruments are preserved in the Shōsōin, the 8th-century imperial repository in Nara, Japan (fig.3). They range in length from about 44 cm with a lowest pitch near *f′* to 34 cm with a lowest pitch near *a′*. The former would have been the standard 8th-century instrument, since 1·8 *shaku* at that time was about 44 cm; today, however, 1 *shaku* is 30·3 cm, so 1·8*shaku* is 54·5 cm – the length of the modern standard

d'-shakuhachi. The Shōsōin instruments are quite uniform in shape and scale (although among them are specimens made from bamboo, jade, stone and ivory). They differ most importantly from later *shakuhachi* in having five rather than four front finger-holes. When the six holes (counting also the thumb-hole) are opened in succession the result is a close approximation of a major scale – in keeping with Chinese modal practice but quite unlike the modern instrument's anhemitonic pentatonic tuning. The feature linking these specimens most closely with later *shakuhachi* is the bevelled mouthpiece. It is cut diagonally towards the outside of the instrument, so that the blowing-edge is on the inner rather than the outer surface of the bamboo cylinder – the opposite of the structure of modern Chinese end-blown flutes. (This distinction should be of help in evaluating the claim that the modern *shakuhachi* derives from a Chinese end-blown flute imported during the 14th or 15th century.) The 'notch' itself is wide and shallow as on modern instruments; it lacks, however, the thin inlay of horn or ivory that gives a sharp blowing-edge to the modern instrument – a feature apparently invented no earlier than the 17th century.

Shakuhachi (notched flute) made of stone, 8th century (Shōsōin repository, Nara)

Mr D P Berger

Mr D P Berger

Other traits distinguishing these eight specimens from the *fuke-shakuhachi* include the absence of external flaring at the bottom and the relatively thinner walls. Both outside and inside diameters are considerably narrower than for the *fuke-shakuhachi*: typical outside diameters would be 2·4 cm for a Shōsōin specimen and 3·5 cm flaring to 5 cm for a similarly pitched modern instrument. Three bamboo nodes are visible on the surface (although of course they have been drilled through internally); even the stone and ivory models preserve this feature. Modern *shakuhachi* have three nodes in approximately corresponding locations, but they have additional nodes at either extremity (see §(iii) below).

By the 10th century the *shakuhachi* had been dropped from the court orchestra, and for several centuries there is virtually no trace of the instrument. No notation survives for the archaic *shakuhachi*, and there exist no manuscripts or specimens to help the scholar bridge the gap to the next stage. When references to the *shakuhachi* reappear in the 15th and 16th centuries, we seem to be dealing with the *hitoyogiri (-shakuhachi)*, which like all subsequent instruments has only four front finger-holes (fig.4).

Shakuhachi (notched flute): (a) played by the Japanese virtuoso Yamaguchi Gorō; (b) view showing the front four finger-holes (private collection)

Mr D P Berger

Mr D P Berger

The *hitoyogiri* was shorter, straighter and rounder than the modern *shakuhachi*. There was only one bamboo node in the length of the instrument, hence its name: ‘one-node cutting’. Musically it had a smaller range (about an 11th) and was less susceptible to altering pitches by embouchure or half-holing. The earliest *shakuhachi* notation, from 1664, was for *hitoyogiri*.

Some of the medieval references connect the instrument with Buddhist priests of both high and low status. It seems that in addition to its use in the accompaniment of popular songs, the *hitoyogiri* was played by wandering beggar-priests called *komosō* (‘rush-mat priests’). This was an early step on the path to the *fuke-shakuhachi*’s later exclusive role as a Zen instrument. On the other hand, the tale of the importation of the *shakuhachi* from China in the 15th century via a Zen priest seems to be no more than a ‘justification myth’ fabricated by the nascent Fuke sect in the 18th century to obtain monopoly concessions from the government.

The *hitoyogiri* and the Fuke instrument seem to be close relatives, but the greater range, richness and flexibility of the latter were surely major factors in the decline of the *hitoyogiri* during the late 18th century. Another related instrument, the *tenpuku* (lit. ‘blow heaven’), is of uncertain origin but seems unlikely to be a direct ancestor of the modern *shakuhachi*. First appearing among warriors of Satsuma, southern Japan, during the late 16th century, it had faded out by the late 19th century, leaving a repertory of seven short solo pieces. Extant examples vary in construction, averaging a mere 30 cm in length though all with 4+1 holes like the modern *shakuhachi*. The mouthpieces, however, were of both the *shakuhachi* type (slanting outward) and the Chinese type (slanting inward), the latter being more common. There were usually three bamboo nodes, the bottom one only partially open, and the instrument had a slight reverse conical bore. The range was about an 11th, as for the *hitoyogiri*.

(ii) Emergence of the modern shakuhachi

The standard *shakuhachi* of today, a slightly evolved version of the *fuke-shakuhachi*, took shape during the 17th and 18th centuries. It is much thicker than previous types, and the lower end is flared. These features are often claimed to have developed in response to the instrument's use as a defensive weapon by the priests of the Fuke sect. This sect was formed by ex-samurai who, finding themselves unemployed in the late 17th century, used the cover of religious asceticism to gain a government-approved monopoly on the use of the *shakuhachi* in begging for alms, in exchange, apparently, for serving as government spies. Under cover of the basket-like *tengai* hats that hid their faces, these *komusō* ('priests of nothingness') wandered the country freely at a time when travel was restricted (fig. 5). It is at least equally probable, however, that the thicker, flared *fuke-shakuhachi* was influenced in its development by the similarly proportioned south Chinese *dongxiao*, which could have entered Japan with the flood of Chinese immigrants during the 17th century.

Priests of emptiness and nothingness: a train of komusō'beggar priests'

The International Shakuhachi Society

The International Shakuhachi Society

At any rate, during the 18th century, as the *hitoyogiri* continued to be used for vocal accompaniment and in the *sankyoku* (chamber music) ensemble, the Fuke instrument developed a solo repertory for use in meditation and by lone wandering mendicants. At one time there were about 40 *komusō* temples around the country, many of which developed their own repertories. In the mid-century the master

Kurosawa Kinko (1710–71) visited many such temples in search of local pieces; he eventually ‘arranged’ or ‘composed’ over 30 tunes, which today form the bulk of the repertory of *honkyoku* (‘basic pieces’) for the Kinko school (Kinko-ryū) of *shakuhachi*. Kinko also seems to have pioneered the teaching of *fuke-shakuhachi* to laymen, thus contributing to the demise of the *hitoyogiri*.

In 1871–2, during the wave of ‘modernization’ that swept Japan, the Fuke sect was banned and playing of the *shakuhachi* for religious purposes outlawed. To protect their livelihood the leading teachers concentrated on secularizing the instrument. It was during this period that the *fuke-shakuhachi* became a fully fledged member of the *sankyoku* trio. The *sankyoku* repertory was known as *gaikyoku* (‘outside pieces’) in opposition to the basic *honkyoku*. Various teachers vied in making new arrangements of *sankyoku* melodies for *shakuhachi*. Among these was the young Nakao Tozan (1876–1956), who founded his own Tozan school (Tozan-ryū) in 1896. Concentrating at first on the *gaikyoku*, which were much more metrically regular than the rubato *honkyoku*, he pioneered the precise notation of rhythm in *shakuhachi* music. This orientation, plus his contacts with Western music, surely influenced him when he came to create *honkyoku* for his own school, beginning in 1904. The Tozan *honkyoku* are much more rhythmical and more clearly structured than the Kinko ones; they tend to follow the pitches of *sankyoku* scales rather than the less precise Kinko *honkyoku* intonation. Most are intended as duets, trios and quartets, often including homophonic chordal sections rich in parallel 4ths and 5ths, a feature which is unknown elsewhere in Japanese music and clearly an attempt to blend Japanese melody and Western harmony. The founder also encouraged the use of the *shakuhachi* in *shinkyoku* (‘new-style pieces’), primarily Western-influenced compositions for *shakuhachi* with other instruments.

The Kinko and Tozan schools are now of approximately equal strength and dominate the *shakuhachi* world today. Several other smaller schools exist; most are outgrowths of local Fuke temples that have kept alive part of their original repertories. The term Meian or Myōan school is often applied to these non-Kinko Fuke traditions as a whole, although in fact there is no organizational unity among them. Most of these ‘sub-schools’ do not include any *gaikyoku* in their repertories. It should also be mentioned that, except in the Meian schools, the *shakuhachi* is not commonly considered by its performers to be primarily a religious instrument (*hōki* or *zengu*) any more, but first and foremost a musical instrument (*gakki*). This is not to deny a spiritual element in *shakuhachi* music and performance, but simply to correct a common misconception among non-Japanese. Some players, however, still believe in the concept of *ichion-jōbutsu* (‘Buddha-hood in a single note’), a reminder to listen in *honkyoku* for individual musical moments, the elaboration of long-sustained pitches, more than for flowing melodies. Often a pitch is sustained for over 20 seconds with only subtle bending, ornamentation and timbral changes.

The *shakuhachi* has proved attractive to modern Western-style composers both in Japan and abroad (see §IX, 4 below). Takemitsu’s *November Steps* (1967) brought it to worldwide attention (along with the Biwa), keeping closely to traditional *honkyoku* technique and mood. The instrument has also been used in jazz (for example, by John Kaizan Neptune) and occasionally in other non-traditional genres.

(iii) Construction

The bamboo selected for *shakuhachi* construction is of the type called *madake* (*Phyllostachys reticulata*). It is typified by large joints that are more widely spaced than those of other types of bamboo. The portion of bamboo stalk used in making the instrument incorporates the root, although much of this is cut away for the sake of appearance. The typical instrument incorporates seven nodes (seven being a mystical number in Japan): three positioned approximately as on the ancient *shakuhachi* and *tenpuku*; one at the upper extremity; and three closely spaced at the root end. Positioning the blowing-edge on the uppermost node gives it a harder consistency than would obtain on the softer internodal section.

The older instrument, constructed in one piece, has largely been replaced since the late 19th century by a two-piece (*nakatsugi*) instrument that is easier to carry. After a period of heating and drying to remove oils and moisture, the bamboo is shaped first by heating it and then by applying pressure to straighten out any irregularities in the material. During this process the bell is given a slight upward curve to enhance the instrument's appearance. The bamboo is then stored for six months to allow further evaporation.

The bamboo is then cut to approximately its final length and hollowed out. The bore is somewhat reverse-conical, narrowing from about 2 cm in the upper part to about 1·5 cm at the lower end on a standard instrument. This follows the structure of the bamboo itself, the internal diameter of which narrows even as its external size swells near the root. The bore is slightly elliptical, and the external cross-section even more so – slightly wider than it is deep.

The bamboo is then cut into two sections. The bore of each one is enlarged by a gouge to accommodate a tube joining the lower and upper sections. This process allows fine adjustment of the spacing of the nodes in relation to the finger-holes to produce a pleasing symmetry, but it also eases the remaining stages of production and aids portability.

Next, the finger-holes are drilled or burnt out. Since each piece of bamboo differs, the precise position, size and angle of the holes must be adjusted during manufacture by testing the sound: the maker must therefore also be a skilled player. Until recently the front four holes were often spaced equidistantly, separated most typically by a tenth of the instrument's total length; but this rendered the *f′* and *a′* holes slightly flat and sharp respectively, which might not concern a solo player but caused difficulties when playing in ensemble with other instruments. Intonation was then corrected either through angling the holes (usually toward the top of the instrument) or through embouchure. This problem is now eliminated by variable spacing of holes. Exact size and shape of the holes may also be varied to suit a particular performer, but the standard diameter is around 1 cm.

The Japanese sense of temperament has always been relatively flexible, but Western influence has led to the adoption of A = 440 as the standard, with intervals increasingly approaching Western-tempered ones. *Shakuhachi* makers have generally followed suit, although both climate and individual playing style affect the final result.

The mouthpiece is fashioned by sawing inwards towards the top of the instrument at an angle of about 30°. A small insert of water-buffalo horn or ivory is then inlaid into the blowing-edge and glued into position. This insert is trapezoidal in the Kinko-ryū instrument and crescent-shaped in the Tozan-ryū.

Finally comes *jinuri*, painting the bore and the inner surface of the finger-holes with up to five coats of a mixture of black or red lacquer, water and an extremely fine polishing powder (*tonoko*). This requires great skill, as the thickness of the coat at each point affects not only timbre but also pitch.

Mass-produced *shakuhachi* of lathe-turned wood or moulded plastic have become popular since the 1970s. These have the advantage of being cheap and resistant to splitting, but they are considered inferior both aurally and visually.

Shakuhachi may range in size from about 1·1 *shaku* (pitched a 5th above the standard instrument) to well over three *shaku*. For *sankyoku* ensembles only two or three sizes are necessary, since singers are expected to conform to the standard tessitura. For modern folksong accompaniment, a professional player may carry up to 12 *shakuhachi* (from 1·3 to 2·4) to adjust to all possible singers. In modern compositions as well as *honkyoku*, almost any size may be used depending on the mood of the composer or performer or on other factors.

Western influence in the 20th century led some to feel that more finger-holes were needed to play 'modern' melodies or even the *meri* pitches of traditional pieces. The seven-hole and nine-hole *shakuhachi* were invented around 1930 and 1950 respectively, but they are quite unsuitable for *honkyoku* and are now rarely used except in modern music. Another short-lived experiment was the *ōkurauro*: invented in the late 1920s, it married a *shakuhachi*-style mouthpiece with a Boehm-system vertical metal flute body.

(iv) Notation

The notation for the first end-blown flute used in the Japanese court music ensemble is not known. However, in 1664 a book entitled *Shichiku shoshin-shū* gave a system of *hitoyogiri* notation of 13 syllable-characters, each representing a different fingering. This system was successively altered by the Meian, Kinko and Tozan schools. The pitch-determining characters in *shakuhachi* notation are stylized versions of *katakana*, one of the Japanese syllabaries. They are written in customary Japanese fashion, in vertical columns from right to left. High and low registers and rhythmic indications are also included in the notation, as is the text in the case of songs.

Rhythmic detail remains largely minimal in notations for the free-rhythm *honkyoku* of the Kinko school, but the more metrical style of most Tozan *honkyoku* led to a much more precise rhythmic notation. *Gaikyoku* of all schools are notated comparatively precisely, with vertical lines corresponding to the horizontal ones of the Galin-Paris-Chevé system (see §VI, 3, and fig.24 below).

(v) Playing technique and performing practice

The *shakuhachi* is held at a downward angle of about 45°. The lower edge of the upper end rests in the hollow of the chin below the lip. Through a narrow embouchure a sharp stream of air is directed at the blowing-edge. (For beginners it is generally difficult to elicit a sound at all.) The strength of the air-stream is varied for dynamic purposes, and occasionally an audible pitchless burst of air is emitted for effect – a technique known as *muraiki*. Through changes in the angle of embouchure alone (*kari-meri*) a single fingering can yield pitches over a range of at least a major 2nd. Lowering the head (*meri*) lowers the pitch and raising the head (*kari*) raises it. Sideways movement of the head also produces a pitch alteration and is used particularly for an ornamental vibrato.

Fingering involves several types of ornamentation. A finger may be slid or rolled slowly off a covered hole. Repeated notes are generally articulated with a rapid finger-flap. (Tonguing is never used for such articulation, although certain types of flutter-tonguing are common.) A two-finger trill onomatopoeically named *korokoro*, and *karakara*, its one-finger version, are common. The difficulty in learning to control all such techniques is encapsulated in the saying *kubifuri sannen koro hachinen* ('head-shaking, three years [to learn], *koro[-koro]* eight years').

Embouchure and fingering, alone or in combination, can produce any pitch within the range of the *shakuhachi*. Kinko *honkyoku* constantly use various sorts of portamento and microtonal ornamentation; the Tozan *honkyoku*, on the other hand, are closer to *gaikyoku* in intonation and ornamentation. In *gaikyoku* it is necessary to match the pitch to the *koto, shamisen* and/or singer.

Notes sounded by changing the angle of the head or by partial holing tend to be quieter and somewhat less sharply focussed than normal. In *honkyoku* this fact has become a virtue, and the dynamic and colouristic differences between basic and other pitches are an important part of the aesthetic. In *sankyoku* the need to be heard among the other instruments renders this a less positive factor, and to composers and performers influenced by a Western aesthetic it is often perceived as a shortcoming. It was for such reasons that the seven-hole and nine-hole *shakuhachi* were devised (see §(iii) above); but they are scorned by almost all players of *honkyoku* and *sankyoku*. The importance attached to timbral variation can also be inferred from the use of alternative fingerings for some pitches – not because they are easier in certain contexts, but because the resulting tone colour differs.

Ex.6 shows the opening of the Kinko honkyoku 'Hifumi hachigaeshi' in traditional and staff notations. The first three main symbols of the Japanese notation translate into a subtly complex variation around the note *d*′, lasting 24 seconds (p1–2). The first symbol represents *e*♭′, the next *d*′, and the third is a *nayashi*, a slow slide up to the preceding pitch from perhaps a three-quarter tone below. All other ornaments shown in the staff version are open to variation or even omission according to player, mood and context. The Japanese notation shown here adds graphic symbols to indicate four specific ornaments, but a good performer will always add more detail, not only of pitch but of dynamics (unspecified in notation) and duration (only loosely notated). The *honkyoku* tradition (aside from the Tozan school) allows much more individual flexibility than is found in most genres of Japanese 'classical' music. As in most genres, however, such freedom is permitted principally to the top-level players.

6. 'Shamisen'

W. Malm, revised by David W. Hughes

A Japanese three-string fretless plucked lute (fig.6) this instrument is called *samisen* in the Kansai area of Kyoto and Osaka, and as part of *koto* chamber music it is often known as *sangen*. Since the mid-17th century it has been a popular contributor to the music of many levels of society, from folk and theatrical forms to classical and avant-garde compositions.

Shamisen player; coloured woodcut by Hokuei, early 19th century

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A *shamisen* player usually accompanies a singer; purely instrumental music occurs primarily during interludes. This has implications for construction: instrument must suit voice, and both must suit their context. Appreciation of *shamisen* music, as of any music, requires an understanding of the context of each genre: physical, historical, aesthetic-philosophical, musical etc.

(i) Construction and performing practice

There are a number of different *shamisen* types, varying in size (though all are about 97 cm long), membrane thickness and material, bridge height and weight, string gauge and type of plectrum (fig. 14*b*). A general distinction is made by the comparative thickness of the flat-topped fingerboard: thick (*futozao*), medium (*chūzao*) and thin (*hosozao*). The neck (*sao*) and pegbox (*itokura*) are now constructed in three sections so that the instrument can easily be taken apart and transported. The preferred woods for the neck and body are red sandalwood, mulberry and quince. The pegs (*itomaki*) are made of ivory, ebony or plastic; the strings are of twisted silk, though the stronger synthetic material tetron is now often preferred to the fragile silk, especially for the treble string.

The upper bridge (*kamikoma*) of the neck is of special interest: the two higher-pitched strings pass over a metal or ivory ridge at the pegbox, but the lowest string is set in a niche in the wooden edge of the box. Immediately below the upper bridge there is a slight cavity carved in the neck (the '*sawari* valley'): the bass string will buzz against the edge of this trough (the '*sawari* mountain') when plucked or when resonating with notes a fifth or octave above it, producing a sound called *sawari*, which is of special value in *shamisen* music. Its invention in the 17th or 18th century may relate to the fact that early *shamisen* players previously used a larger lute, the *biwa*, which has a similar tonal characteristic, although it is differently constructed. In the 1890s a different method was devised, called *azuma-zawari*: a screw inserted from the back of the neck could be turned to adjust the degree of buzzing of the bass string against a tiny metal plate. *Sawari* is not found on the *shamisen*'s Chinese and Okinawan precursors. (Note that the term for the similar resonance on many Indian plucked instruments is *jiwari*.)

A tailpiece (*neo*) of silk rope holds the strings across the rectangular body, which is made of four convex pieces of wood covered at the front and rear by cat- or dogskin. Synthetic membranes are now common, partly for durability. Patterns (*ayasugi*) carved inside the body of expensive instruments affect the tone of the instrument, as does the quality of the skin. The skins are held by glue and shrinkage, without pegs or lashing. An extra semicircle of skin (*bachikawa*) is added at the top centre of the front head to protect it from the blows of the plectrum.

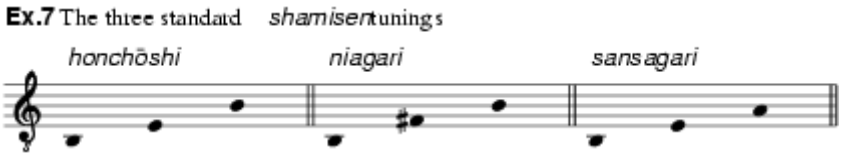
Good plectra (*bachi*) are of ivory or ivory-tipped wood except in certain chamber music (*jiuta* or *sankyoku*) and folk genres, for which tortoise-shell or buffalo-horn tips are used. Practice plectra may be made of plastic or wood. In some lighter forms of *shamisen* music, such as *kouta*, the side of the fingertip is used instead. For the style called *shinnai-nagashi*, one of two shamisen players plays a high obbligato using a capo (*kase*) and a tiny version of the standard plectrum. In most genres the wide edge and triangular tips of the plectrum are as thin as possible, but for *gidayū* they may be 2–4 mm thick. The sorts of difference shown in fig.14*b* affect timbre greatly.

The removable bridges (*koma*) are equally varied. They may be of ivory, tortoise-shell, buffalo-horn, plastic or wood. In *jiuta* the bridge may have small lead weights to help dampen the vibrations. A *gidayū* player may have a large graduated set of lead-weighted bridges to adjust to pitch, humidity etc; these can weigh over 20 g, while a *nagauta* bridge is under 4 g. For quiet practice a very wide 'stealth bridge' (*shinobi-goma*) reduces volume.

A small device (*yubikake*, *yubisuri*) of wool knitted over rubberized thread stretches weblike between the thumb and first finger of the left hand for ease of movement. *Gidayū* players often powder their left hand instead. Left-hand pizzicato (*hajiki*), slides (*koki*, *suri*) and 'hammering-on' (*uchi*) appear in most

genres; right-hand up-plucks (*sukui*) and tremolo are also common. In some genres intended for large theatres or the open air (*nagauta*, *gidayū*, *tsugaru-jamisen*) the plectrum frequently strikes the membrane sharply, producing a percussive accompaniment to the plucked string; in other genres more suited to intimate settings (*kouta*, *jiuta*) this is minimized.

The basic pitch of a *shamisen* depends on the range of the singer, which may vary greatly. The three standard tunings shown in ex.7 may thus be several steps higher or lower. During long compositions the tunings may change frequently, and a few special tunings may appear. Most *shamisen* music is based on the *yō-in* scale system and its modes (see §I, 4).



Ex.7 The three standard *shamisen* tunings

Ex.7 The three standard shamisen tunings

(ii) History and genres

The *shamisen* is believed to have been imported from Ryūkyū in the mid-16th century in a form called the *sanshin* (see §VIII, 1 below). This instrument has a more oval body, is plucked with a talon-like pick and is covered by snakeskin. An instrument of this type originated in China as the *sanxian* and had reached Ryūkyū probably by the 15th century. In Japan the new lute was first used in folk and party music or by narrators who previously performed the *biwa*. Under these influences (and in the absence of large snakes) the construction of the instrument changed greatly. The Chinese, Ryukyuan and one of the Japanese names for the instrument (*sanxian*, *sanshin*, *sangen*) all mean ‘three strings’; the Japanese names *shamisen* and *samisen* are variants thereof.

Historically the *shamisen* is found in many forms of folk and popular music (see §VII, 3 below). Other genres created for the theatres and tea-houses can be divided into two categories, the narrative (*katarimono*) and the lyrical (*uta(i)mono*). A genealogy of these types is given in Table 2 , with their founders’ names when known. Many genre names can be suffixed with *-bushi*, ‘tune, melody’.

TABLE 2: Genres of *shamisen* music

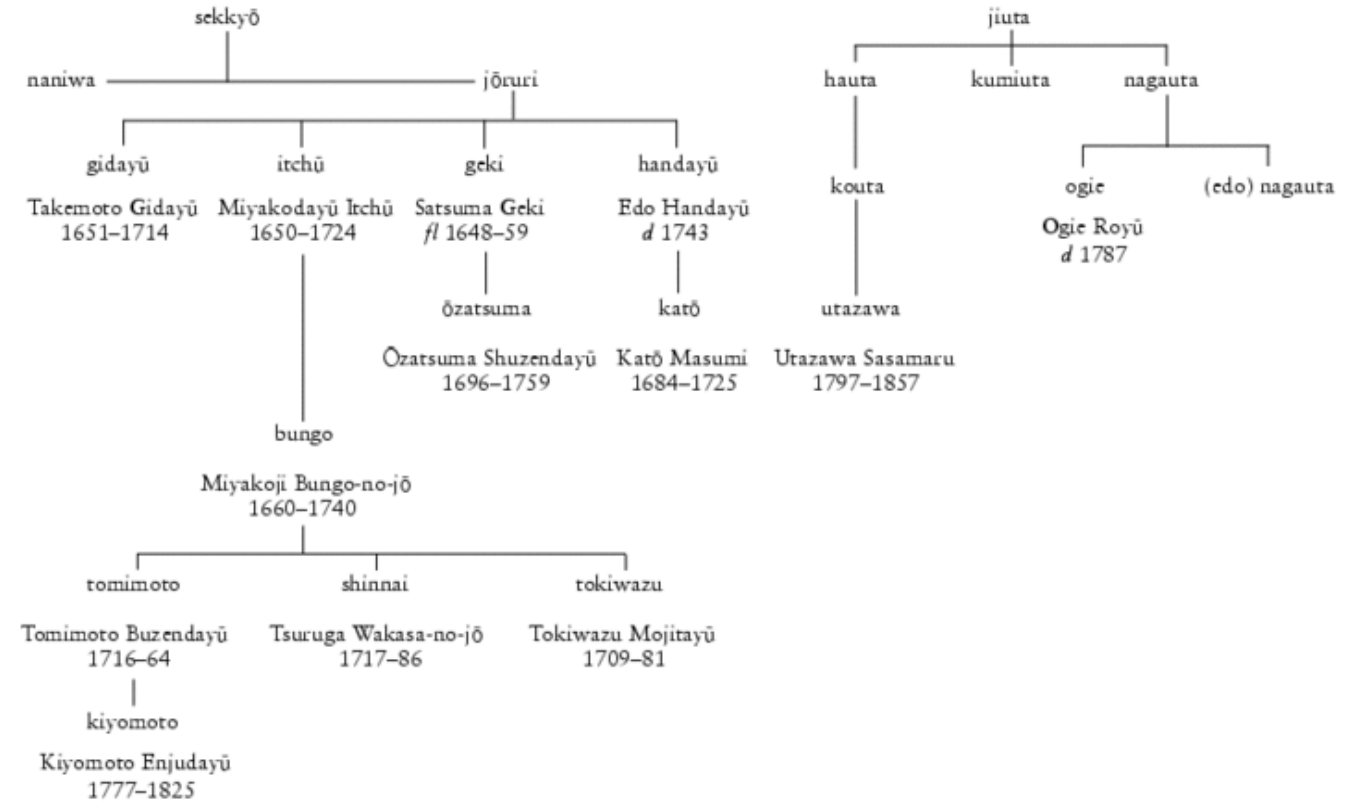


Table 2

Table 2

Several *shamisen* genres are referred to elsewhere in this article, showing the diversity of this instrument type: *jiuta* (§5 above); *gidayū* (§VI, 2 below); *nagauta*, *tokiwazu*, *kiyomoto* (§VI, 3 below); folk *shamisen* (§VII, 3 below); *sanshin* (§VIII, 1 below). Further proof of its importance is that over two-thirds of the 74 LPs in the 1980 series ‘1000 Years of Japanese Classical Music’ involved *shamisen*.

All the variables of construction and technique coalesce to produce each style of *shamisen* music. Superficially similar instruments may nonetheless vary crucially. Thus the thick-neck, heavy-bodied *gidayūshamisen* differs from the similar folk *tsugaru-jamisen* in its plectrum shape, string gauge pattern, *sawari* and other details, not to mention modal sense and playing technique. Technique and timbre match context: the heavy *sawari* of the *gidayū* instrument matches closely the timbre of the voice of the puppet theatre chanter; the finger-plucked *koutashamisen* similarly matches the small voice of the singer.

As in many genres of Japanese music, named, stereotyped melodic patterns are common in *shamisen* music; even when names are lacking, much of any repertory can be analysed into short, recurring motifs (Yakō and Araki, 1998). The relation between voice and *shamisen* is also similar in most genres: the *shamisen*, with its sharp attack, keeps the metre clear, while the voice plays against the beat, with syllables often articulated on an off-beat.

The lyrical forms will be discussed first. The term *jiuta* originally meant ‘local songs’ and was so used until the mid-18th century, after which it represented chamber music with the *koto* (see §II, 4 above). Tradition credits one of two *biwa* musicians, Sawazumi Kengyō and Ishimura Kengyō, with the first *shamisen* music around 1610 in the form of *kumiuta* (song suites; not related to the *koto* genre of the same name). Their music was called *ryūkyūkumiuta*, and six of the original 30 pieces survive from later sources. The earliest collection containing poems of *shamisen* music and some notation is in the 1664 *Shichiku shoshin-shū*, and the earliest notation of *shamisenkumiuta* is found in the *Ōnusa* volume of the 1685 *Shichiku taizen*. The 1703 collection of texts, *Matsu no ha*, begins with *ryūkyūkumiuta*, which are followed by *jiuta no nagauta* and then *hauta*.

The terms *hauta* (‘beginning/short songs’) and *kouta* (‘short songs’) were generally applied to popular songs of the period. Distinctions were sometimes made between *kamigata* songs from the Kansai area and Edo songs from that city. The terms *nagauta* (‘long songs’) and *kouta* were used in earlier periods for a variety of poetic forms but eventually became specific genre names. Both terms were connected with early forms of *shamisen* music in the new *kabuki* theatre, *edo nagauta* eventually becoming its predominant genre. *Ogie-bushi* first appeared in 1766 as part of *kabuki* music and was combined with music of the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters, becoming a separate form. In *utazawa-bushi*, by contrast, an attempt was made to create short songs devoid of erotic connotations.

Among the narrative forms *sekkyō-bushi*, a Buddhist genre of musical story-telling already in existence before the advent of the *shamisen*, adopted the new instrument when it first appeared. *Jōruri* has a similar secular background (see §IV, 3 below) and eventually became a generic term for many different kinds of narrative music. Some of the earliest *biwa* folk narrators came from the Osaka district, then called Naniwa. They originated the genre known as *naniwa-bushi*, in effect a narrative soap opera set in traditional times, which became tremendously popular in the early days of the recording and broadcast industries. The many other forms of narrative music originated in the theatre, *gidayū-bushi* being best known for its origin in *bunraku* puppet drama. *Tokiwazu* and *kiyomoto* and rarely *katō* and *shinnai* are still used in *kabuki*. The other genres survive primarily in concerts of old *jōruri* (*ko-jōruri*) or ‘classic’ (*koten*) performances.

(iii) Modern traditions

The tradition of purely concert (*ozashiki*) *shamisen* music began with performances of narratives outside the theatre, in which context *onna jōruri* (female performers) appeared. In the 19th century new *nagauta* compositions were created that had no theatrical connections, and the cult of the composer became stronger. By the mid-20th century the amateur study of *shamisen* music became ‘respectable’, this change having healthy cultural and technical results. 18th- and 19th-century notations, which used syllables or symbols to represent finger positions, were replaced by new notations based on the French Chevé system, with Arabic numbers and Western rhythm and bar systems. Student recitals, concert pieces, specialist journals and recordings by star performers flourished. Since the mid-20th century it has been possible to buy recordings or notations of the basic repertory of the major genres and to attend concerts of all forms or hear contemporary compositions for ensembles of traditional instruments. The traditional guild system of working for a professional name (*natori*) remains strong, though Western-style lessons exist as well. For example, one may graduate in *shamisen* at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

There have been sporadic attempts at introducing a bass version, but otherwise the *shamisen*, like the *shakuhachi*, survived the 20th century essentially unchanged. Each type of *shamisen* seems to have become ideally suited to its particular niche, and no new niches have emerged as yet to demand further developments.

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III. Notation systems

1. Introduction

W. Malm, revised by David W. Hughes

In order to understand the functional and cultural logic of unfamiliar notation systems it is important first to recognize that notation is not in itself music, but rather an adjunct to the recollection or evocation of sonic events for performing purposes and, in some music cultures, for study or compositional use. A second important point is that the music and all its accessories (such as notation) usually reflect the aesthetics and world views of the peoples in whose culture they were created. Thus, what is important to one music culture may be of much less concern in another: in this context it must be noted that Japanese traditional musicians seldom felt a strong need for detailed notations such as those used by most Western musicians. For the Japanese, notation was merely a memory aid; indeed, the structure of Japanese pieces, the relations between their parts and the subtle nuances of their performing practices did not lend themselves to effective representation in either vertical or horizontal linear graphics. This does not imply an interest in improvisation, which hardly exists in Japanese music. Rather, it reflects a concern in both lessons and performance for a concentration on aural and technical skills with as few visual distractions or inhibitions as possible. Nevertheless, because there has always been a strong guild system (see §I, 3 above) and a tradition of 'secret' pieces (*hikyoku*) in Japanese music, notation systems were fostered that would preserve compositions for future generations in an outline form that only the initiated could translate into sound. It was not until Western musical pragmatism asserted its influence that detailed notation became significant. Thus a discussion of Japanese notation up to the late 19th century must deal with numerous different systems that were used not only for each genre or musical instrument but also for various guilds of performers within each tradition. Here no attempt is made to cover all these variations; rather, the basic principles used in major styles of Japanese notation are demonstrated, with selected examples where necessary for clarity.

The term 'notation' as used above refers to written notation; a broader usage of the term embraces 'oral notation' as well. Many Japanese instruments have long been taught using oral mnemonics (see §III, 4 below), which often later became part of written notation.

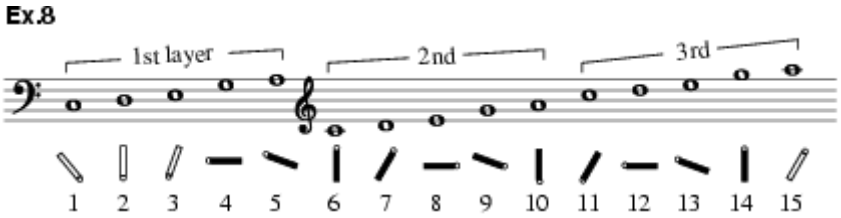
Traditional transmission, then, might involve any of three approaches: direct imitation of another performer (in formal lessons or simply by assiduous overhearing as often in folk contexts); singing of oral mnemonics prior to attempting to play a piece; or reliance on written notation. Despite the startling range of notations shown below, it was only in the 20th century that notation assumed importance in teaching many genres. This trend results not only from modernization but also from the fact that few pupils feel they have time to learn by the traditional, time-intensive methods. For the same reason, a fourth method of transmission is becoming common (as elsewhere): use of recordings, either commercial or made during lessons.

2. Vocal music

W.P. Malm, revised by David W. Hughes

Chinese sources mention singing in Japan as early as the 3rd century CE, and Japan's first literary works of the 8th century include the texts of many songs; but actual vocal notation in Japan developed first primarily in the context of Buddhist music (see §IV, 3 below). This tradition came to Japan from China and Korea in the period between 553 and 784, and expanded greatly in the subsequent Heian (794–1185) and Kamakura (1192–1333) periods. Surviving theoretical materials show a continuous Chinese influence.

In terms of notation the most important early system is the *goin-hakase* ('the five-toned sage'). It is attributed to the Japanese priest Kakui (*b* 1236) of the Shingon sect, although it may have been influenced by the ritual *mudrā* (hand gesture) and oracle stick arrangements of ancient India. The Japanese system divides the 15 notes of three octaves of the anhemitonic pentatonic scale into three layers of five notes each; thus the system is sometimes called the *goin-sanjū* ('the five tones and three layers'). Individual pitches are represented by short lines placed at an angle like the hour hand of a clock. If started on *c*, the notes of the pentatonic scale would be represented as in ex.8 . The direction of these line symbols does not represent graphically the pitch of a note, as is common in most Western notations. Since Sino-Japanese texts are normally written in columns from the right-hand side of a page, the music notations of this system generally appear to the left of the text. The names of specific vocal patterns or styles are included with the pitches. Thus, as in fig.16, the notation of the vocal rendition of one syllable may vary considerably. Various Buddhist sects in Japan developed their own notation systems and approaches to the performance of named vocal patterns. In keeping with the rote teaching method and the 'secret piece' tradition of Japan, many of the later, seemingly simplified notation systems, such as *karifu* and *meyasu*, became more abstract and less easily read without guidance than the *goin-hakase* itself. Many of these systems are still in use, not only in Buddhist music but also in surviving imperial vocal traditions that adopted variants of such notations centuries ago.



Ex.8

Another vocal notation system of greater importance in later Japanese music was the *gomafu*, in which teardrop-shaped lines were placed beside characters as neumes and indications of longer vocal patterns. The 12th-century secular epic tradition of the 'Tale of the Heike' (*heikyoku*, see II, 3 above) adopted this system in a form called *sumifu*, and the major classical drama form called *nō* that began to evolve in the 13th century also used such a notation system (often called *gomaten*). The *nō* system includes more references to pitch areas as well as to vocal patterns. Each major school of *nō* now uses such a system, and there are detailed textbooks in each school for learning the meaning of each

symbol. The correct interpretation of such notations, however, remains in the vocal lessons and in a student's eventual acceptance into a guild, although the advent of records and teaching tapes has rendered the secret tradition somewhat more ritualistic than practical.

Later secular vocal traditions of narratives accompanied by *biwa* or *shamisen* seldom made more than occasional graphic references to the vocal lines, although some aspects of the instrumental interjections or interludes normally appear in red between each line of the text. During the later Edo period (1603–1868) music accompanied by *shamisen* or *koto* also tended not to depend on notation for vocal lines except in the form of instrumentally derived pitch notations. Therefore the rest of vocal notation is best described in the context of instrumental forms.

Japanese folksong has generally been orally transmitted, but one song, *Esashi Oiwake*, has been notated since the early 20th century with a variety of related systems devised specifically for use in teaching. The version shown (from the 1960s) reveals Western influence in its staff (albeit of 6 lines) and left-to-right orientation. However, as each of the 5 phrases is to be sung in one breath, the vocal part of each phrase is shown logically as a continuous line whose peaks, loops and dots express specific ornaments quite precisely. The ornaments are identified in the eight boxes at the bottom. Some influence from Buddhist notation is evident. (For a Western notation of part of this song, see §VII, 3, ex. 18 below.)

3. Instrumental music

W. Malm, revised by David W. Hughes

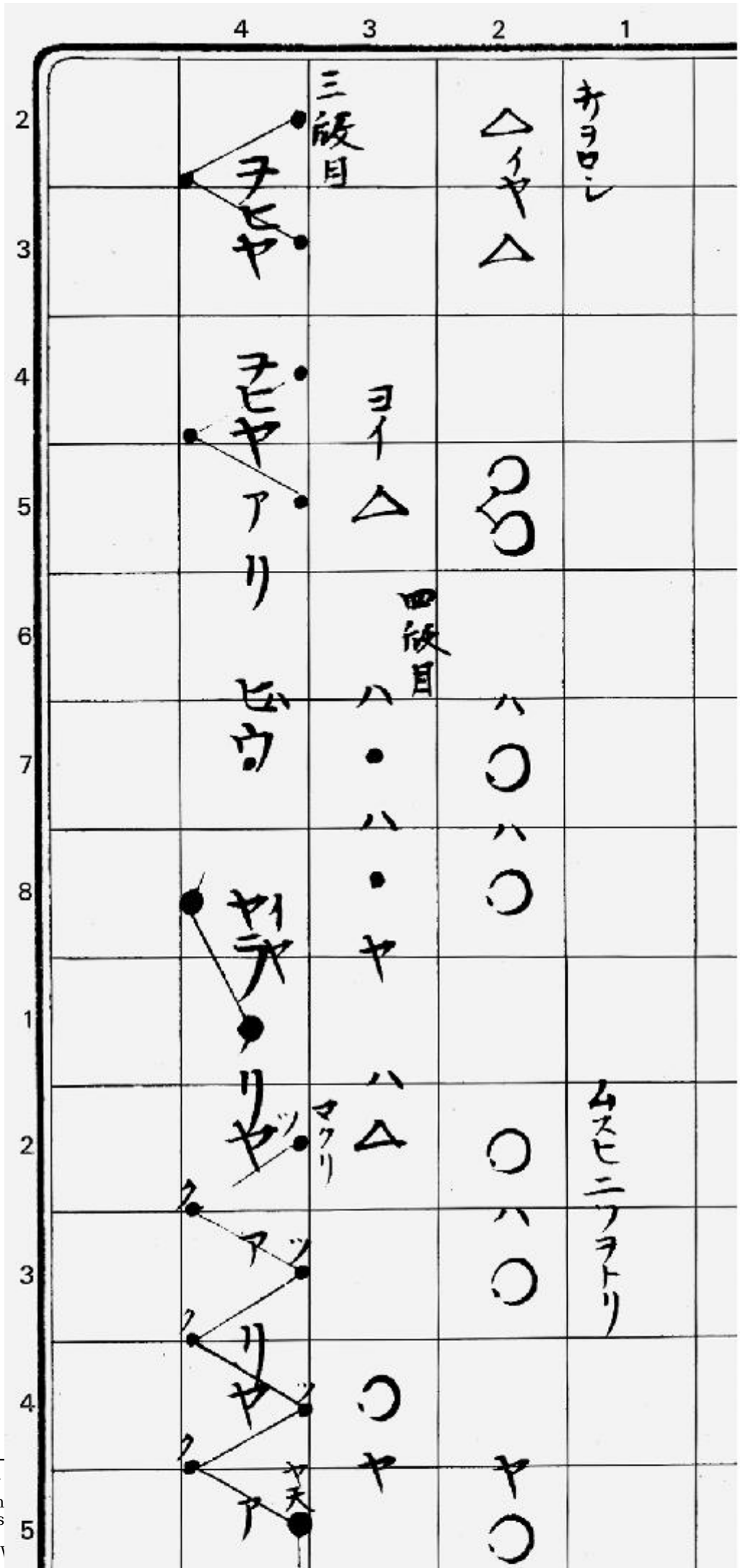
The first instrumental notation in Japan came directly from the Chinese court traditions of the Tang dynasty (618–907). The earliest surviving example is a *biwa* notation dated 768. It is followed by various wind instrument parts dating from the 10th century to the 13th, after which instrument partbooks are fairly plentiful. Most of these books were intended for use in the music of the court *gagaku* ensembles. Scores for such music did not exist before the 20th century. A complete partbook contains the basic repertory organized in sets of pieces that are in the same mode. Notations for string instruments (the *biwa* or *koto* or *wagon*) consist primarily of the names of stereotyped melodic patterns or of one pitch that would appear at the start of a time unit; the *shō* (mouth organ) notation also shows only the name of one pitch, or perhaps of one pipe, since this is tablature notation.

Extensive research by Picken and his students has demonstrated that these simple string notations for *tōgaku*, taken at face value, show a closely heterophonic ensemble, with each instrument ornamenting a single clear melody in different ways; the earliest notations for *ryūteki* flute reveal this same melodic outline (see §V below, and Marett 1985). They conclude that early *tōgaku* was played at a much faster tempo suiting these melodies. Today, however, these original tunes are largely hidden from the listener by stereotyped chords on the *shō* and arpeggios on the *biwa* and *koto*, each executed at a stately tempo – even though the notations for these three instruments are little changed from a millennium ago. Each is still a tablature, indicating which single pipe on the *shō* plays the lowest note of the chord, and which *biwa* fret or pair of *koto* strings is the basis for the arpeggios.

Today the *ryūteki* flute and *hichiriki* oboe are perceived as the melodic instruments of *tōgaku*, but their melodies have become considerably more elaborate over the centuries, moving away from the original tune that they shared with other instruments, and in this case their notations have also grown more

complex. There are two notation systems in use today. The fundamental column consists of the mnemonics (*shōga*) with which the line is sung when it is learnt, along with symbols for the instrument's finger-holes in smaller characters to the left. The nuances and ornamentations of the line are not marked, as they are part of the oral guild tradition, learnt through singing the *shōga*. The short lines along the right-hand side of the column indicate the basic beats, with a large dot representing the accented beat of the hanging drum (*tsuridaiko*). Percussion parts in *gagaku* consist of similar dots, with the names of stereotyped rhythmic patterns appropriate to the given music.

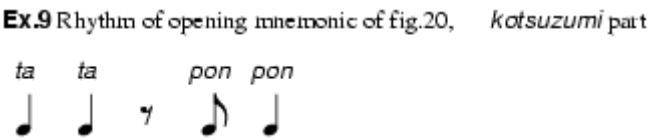
The names of patterns or pitches are all there is to the instrumental parts of *biwa*-accompanied narrative songs notated before the period of modernization. Notation for the four instruments of the *nō* drama, however, is much more complex. As for court music notation, more than one system is combined in modern written notations.Fig.7 is a rare example of a full instrumental score (partbooks being traditional). The flute notation normally consists of a sequence of mnemonics (*shōga*) set on graphlike paper whose columns of squares represent the traditional eight-beat frame of reference in which much *nō* music is set. Such a flute part can be seen in the left-hand column of fig.20, interlaced with 16 beats of the *taiko* (stick drum) part. The drum parts of *nō* consist of named stereotyped patterns, so that one often finds in their notations only the names of the patterns, set alongside texts in vocal accompaniments or in sequence for purely instrumental sections. As shown in fig.20, modern lesson books may contain various dots and triangles that represent sounds of the drums placed in columns of squares (like separate flute parts). This system shows specific rhythmic patterns in some detail. For instance, in fig.20, column 2 contains the *kotsuzumi* (shoulder drum) part and shows that two different kinds of sound are produced on the drum and that three different drummer's calls (*kakegoe*) occur. The rhythm of the pattern is implied (the opening mnemonics would be *ta*, *ta*, rest, *pon*, *pon*: see ex.9), and the names of two patterns are listed at the right-hand corner of each notation (they are *uchi-oroshi* and *musubi futatsu odori*). The middle column provides similar information for the *ōtsuzumi* drum. Column 4, the *nō taiko* stick drum notation, is the most complex, involving four elements and much redundancy. This is another example of the merging of oral and written transmission systems. At its simplest level it consists of the names of the two patterns that make up this phrase, *sandanme* and *makuri*; these appear just to the right of the line separating columns 3 and 4. A veteran player needs no more information, since such patterns have been learnt by rote. However, here the dots in zigzag pattern represent the left- and right-stick strokes, with the strength of the stroke shown by the size of the dot. In the second half of the phrase, these dots are accompanied by their mnemonics (*tsuku tsuku tsuku ten tere tsuku tere tsuku*); these alone would have indicated the correct rhythm and stickwork. Finally, three drum calls are shown in small syllables just to the right of the flute mnemonics, between beats 6 and 7, 8 and 1, and 4 and 5. (The flute mnemonics are added in the middle of this column because flute and stick drum are closely synchronized, their patterns beginning on beat 2, while the other drums start on beat 1.) A veteran player could in theory sight-read the drum parts (although this would never be done), but the flute part does not indicate precise pitches and thus can be learnt only from a teacher.



Hayashi (drums and flute) notation from the nō dance ‘Jo no mai’; column 1 contains the kotsuzumi pattern names, column 2 the kotsuzumi and drum call notation, column 3 the ōtsuzumi pattern names and notation with drum call notation (with the taiko patterns on the left), column 4 the taiko notation and flute mnemonics; the numbers down the left-hand side indicate the beats

From "Yokyoku Maibyoshi Taisei" (Osaka, 1914)

From "Yokyoku Maibyoshi Taisei" (Osaka, 1914)



Ex.9 Rhythm of opening mnemonic of fig.20, kotsuzumi part; the drum call ‘iya’ falls between the first two notes

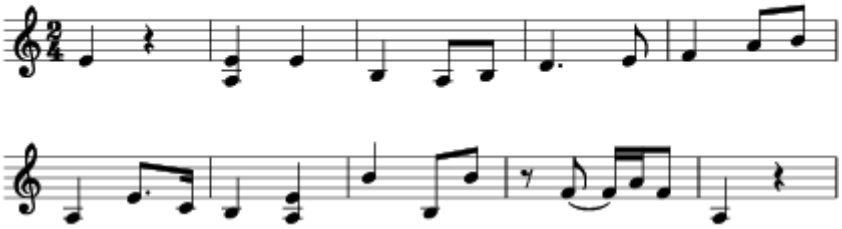
Similar graphlike rhythmic notations can be found for drum music in the later *kabuki* theatre, particularly in 19th- and 20th-century sources, although most traditional drum music is still maintained through a basically oral learning system. Some *kabuki* plays contain a cue sheet (*tsukechō*), which indicates by traditional names which type of percussion or special off-stage (*geza*) music is to appear at a specific moment in the play; the music is seldom entrusted to notation, however. An exception is shown in fig.21 , which notates a passage for the *ōtsuzumi* hip drum and *kotsuzumi* shoulder drum. In this particular style, called ‘*chirikara* rhythm’ after its mnemonics, the two drums play interlocking patterns. The one here is learnt by singing *chirikara tsuton chirikara tsuton chirikara chiritoto tsuta pon*. *Chi*, *ri* and *tsu* are strokes on the hip drum, *ka*, *ra*, *to(n)* and *pon* on the shoulder drum. The small single column of symbols at the top of fig.21 is the traditional drummers’ shorthand. The # symbol (a) represents *chirikara*; the next small symbol is *tsu*, then the circle is *ton*; the line to the right of and below this passage indicates that it is repeated; and so forth. Below this is a more complex modern notation. The rightmost column numbers the 8 beats (marked by solid horizontal lines). The leftmost column shows mnemonics for the *shamisen*, replaced by the song lyrics once the vocalist enters. The central section shows the hip drum to the right and the shoulder drum to the left: shape and colour indicates the type of drum stroke, but the mnemonics are written beside each stroke as well; the topmost symbol in each column is the drum call *hao*.

The most detailed notations of Japanese music are found in the tablatures of the *koto* and *shamisen* as each developed in the Edo period and in the 20th century. The earliest notations were in the *Shichiku shoshin-shū* of 1664, but indigenous systems designed specifically for such instruments appeared first with the *Ongyoku chikaragusa* of 1762 for the *shamisen* and the *Sōkyoku taiishō* of 1799 for the *koto*. The *shamisen* notation used dots with various internal designs that represented positions on the fingerboard of the instrument, while the *koto* notation used the numbers of its 13 strings with circles that indicated rhythms and performing methods. The pitches of the strings were determined by the name of the tuning in which a piece was played. A so-called *iroha-fu* system also appears in some *shamisen* music, which indicates finger positions by a solfège based on the traditional order of syllables in Japanese language lessons.

The forms of notation used in the 20th century by the two major *koto* schools are shown in fig.22a and *b*. Pitches are still shown by string numbers (and hence vary with the tuning), but bars and rhythmic symbols are adopted from Western notation, as can be seen in the transcription (ex.10). Fig.23a and *b*

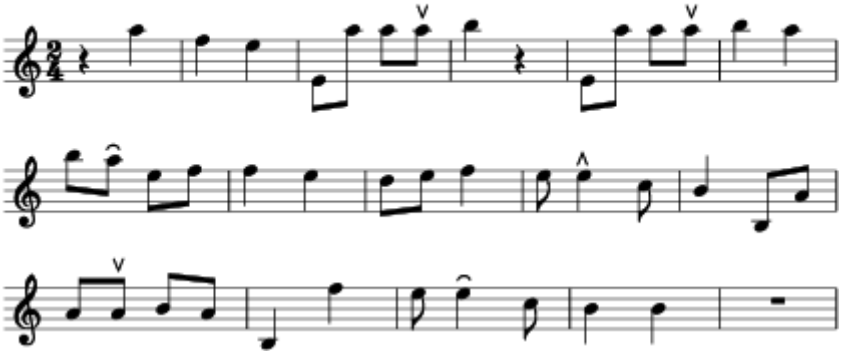
show common modern methods of *shamisen* notation that also reflect Western rhythmic symbols. In the so-called *kosaburō-fu* the Arabic numbers represent pitches in a scale, and in the *bunka-fu* they stand for finger positions on the strings, as seen by comparison with the Western transcription (ex.11).

Ex.10 Opening of *Hachidan no shirabe, koto* piece; transcr. from *koto* notation, fig.22, by W. Malm



Ex.10 Opening of Hachidan no shirabe, koto piece; transcr. from kotonotation, fig.23, by W. Malm

Ex.11 Opening of *Echigojishi, nagauta* piece; transcr. from *shamisen* notation, fig.23, by W. Malm



Ex.11 Opening of ‘Echigojishi’,nagauta piece; transcr. from shamisen notation, fig.24, by W. Malm

Similar precision under Western influence is seen in the notation in fig.24 for the modern Tozan school of *shakuhachi* (see §II, 5 above). Duration is again shown by lines adjacent to the fingering symbols; small symbols represent grace notes; occasional cureicues to the right indicate specific ornaments; and a Western 4/4 time signature is given at the top. Such notational precision is found only when the *shakuhachi*, as here, plays with other instruments: its solo repertory is largely in free rhythm and highly ornamented, and notation tends to leave much more to oral transmission (see §II, 5, ex.6 above).

Today it is possible to purchase notations of traditional *koto* or *shamisen* music in systems that can be read without direct reference to a teacher. However, the general Western fixation on detailed graphic representations of basically sonic events has yet to inhibit the more direct and musical tradition of aural comprehension, which is the characteristic of earlier Japanese music and its notational methods.

4. Oral mnemonics

David W. Hughes

Oral transmission has persisted over the centuries in Japan for various reasons: the desire for control and secrecy, the tradition of blind musicians and so forth. But a major reason is simply because it works well. Every written instrumental notation discussed in §3 above has an oral dimension. In

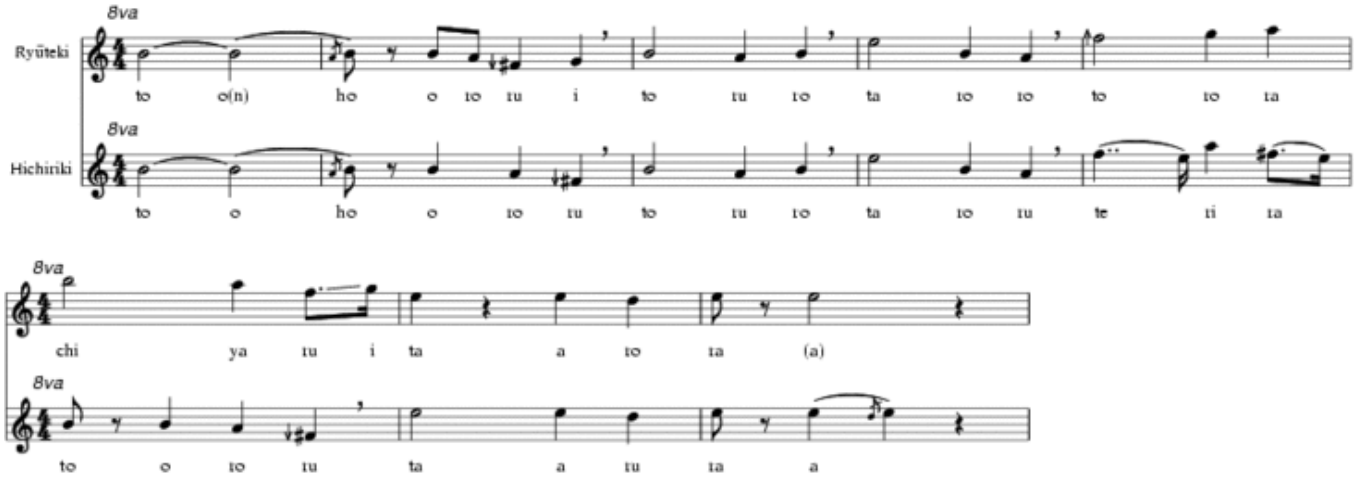
learning or recalling an instrumental part, a performer may sing either syllables indicating precise finger positions or drum strokes (as for *shakuhachi* or *shō*), or a set of mnemonics that primarily represent relative pitch rather than specific fingerings or absolute pitches (as for the *nō* flute or *hichiriki*). The most common general term for all such systems is *shōga* or *kuchi-shōga*.

In many cases there is a direct link between the acoustic-phonetic features of the vowels and consonants of the mnemonics and the sounds they represent. Such systems can be called acoustic-iconic. It is this acoustic similarity or identity that makes such syllables particularly powerful in learning and recalling music. Similar systems are in use in numerous cultures around the world (see Hughes, 1991, 2000).

Performers stress the importance of learning via *shōga*. Still today, despite the existence of written notations, a flute player in a *gagaku* or *nō* ensemble will learn each piece first by singing it, thus acquiring subtleties of expression that elude writing.

It is perhaps surprising that such systems seem to work without their users being aware of the logic behind them. This is possible because of the innate nature of the sound symbolism involved. Ex.12 shows a passage of *shōga* for *ryūteki* flute and *hichiriki* oboe in court music. Note firstly that the consonants mark articulation: [t] starts a breath phrase, [h] marks a re-articulation of the same pitch, [r] shows a liquid shift to another pitch. Cross-culturally, we find that ‘stop’ consonants such as [p, t, k] generally mark the sharp attack of a plucked string or struck membranophone or idiophone. The deeper and/or more resonant pitches are more commonly marked by the voiced consonants [b, d, g]. Thus the open bass string of the *shamisen* is sung as [don] vs. the [ton] of the higher-pitched open middle string; and the alternation of normal stroke and rim-shot on folk *taiko* stick drums may be recited as [don kaka]. There are convincing if complex acoustic reasons for this, but the connection seems instinctive and unconscious for the vast majority of people.

Ex.12 Opening of *Etenraku (hyōjō)* showing *shōga* for *ryūteki* and *hichiriki*



Ex.12Ryūteki and hichiriki passages from tōgakupiece ‘Etenraku’ in hyōjō mode, with shōgabelow

Final consonants may express decay. Since wind instruments generally sustain a note without change of volume, the main vowel can simply be prolonged. But a longer note on a plucked string or a struck instrument is often distinguished from a shorter one by adding a nasal consonant [n], reflecting the changes in amplitude and perhaps timbre over time.

Vowels work independently of the consonants, and their role is more interesting. In the flute *shōga* of ex.10, four vowels occur: [i a o u]. It turns out that these indicate relative pitch of successive melody notes with great accuracy. In Table 3 , when a note sung with the vowel [a] is followed by a higher one sung to [i], one point was entered after the + sign in row a, column i; and so forth. This revealed that when a *shoga* vowel sequence places [i] adjacent to any other vowel, the pitch sung to [i] is higher in 97 out of 100 cases; [a] is similarly 'higher' than [o] in 56 out of 57 cases, and [u] is lower than its neighbour in all 83 of its occurrences. Overall, given the *shōga*, one can predict melodic direction with 98% accuracy. Yet this pattern is not taught as such: rather, one simply learns the *shōga* for each piece without explanation. The system is almost entirely unconscious.

TABLE 3: Vowel pitch succession in *ryūteki* solfège in a sample of 4 *tōgaku* pieces

2nd vowel	i	a	o	u
1st vowel				
i	+ 6	+ 0	+ 2	+ 0
	− 1	−30	−16	− 3
a	+ 8	+ 5	+ 1	+ 0
	− 1	−10	−26	−16
o	+11	+30	+15	+ 0
	− 0	− 0	− 9	−19
u	+27	+ 5	+13	+ 0
	− 0	− 0	− 0	− 0

Table 3

Table 3

A similar pattern is found for *hichiriki* (with an additional vowel) and *nō* flute. For *shamisen*, the system is somewhat different: [o] represents the open 1st (bass) string, and also the open 2nd string in certain contexts; [u] is any fingered note on the 1st or 2nd string; [e] is the open 3rd (treble) string, and the open 2nd string in certain contexts; [i] is the fingered 3rd string; and [a] is a double stop. Thus the vowels represent fingering positions primarily and relative pitch secondarily.

In general and in many cultures, the ordering [i e a o u] represents relative pitch from high to low. This corresponds to what acousticians call the 'second formant (F2) frequency' order of these vowels, which is basically the vibratory frequency of the oral cavity when held in the correct shape for each vowel. This is an area of overtone activity, fixed for each vowel and largely independent of the fundamental pitch at which one speaks or sings that vowel, and is therefore often called a vowel's Intrinsic Pitch. For Spanish, typical F2 values for [i e a o u] are 2300, 1900, 1300, 900 and 800 Hz respectively. Humans have subliminal access to this ordering in many ways, the simplest of which is whispering; others include whistling, playing a jew's harp or musical bow, or listening to the sound of a bottle being filled with liquid. Thus in vowel-pitch mnemonic systems, vowels are used overwhelmingly in accordance with F2 ordering, and a musician gains an additional tool for recording melodic contour.

Competing with Intrinsic Pitch are the phenomena of Intrinsic Duration and Intrinsic Intensity. It is found (again for convincing reasons) that in most languages the vowels closest to [i] and [u], those spoken with the mouth relatively closed, will take less time to articulate and register a lower volume on a vU meter than will more open vowels; by contrast, the 'longest' and 'loudest' vowel is [a], followed by [o] and [e]. This is why [i] and [u] are often favoured for short or quiet notes or those in weak metric positions in oral mnemonic systems, while [a] tends towards the opposite. Thus [a] is used to represent double-stops on a *shamisen* regardless of pitch. Many exceptions to vowel-pitch ordering are ascribable to these competing factors.

Acoustic-iconic systems are less precise than, say, Tonic Sol-fa. The latter is perfectly consistent in indicating interval size, but its constituent syllables are the result of an arbitrary historical development and thus carry no intrinsic force outside the specific cultural system. The vowel-pitch systems of Japan and Korea, by contrast, are less reliable: they do not indicate precise interval size or pitch, and their prediction of melodic direction is less than perfect, often clashing with rhythmic considerations; yet the innate symbolism of their sounds gives them an advantage for oral transmission. This is surely a major reason why most Japanese written notations, even those than can indicate precise pitch, duration, fingering, timbre etc., still include *shōga*. Japanese music students raised on 'do re mi' often find the traditional *shōga* distracting and therefore try to ignore it, but their teachers continue to persevere. In villages in Iwate, northern Japan, a student of the 'Devil Sword Dance' (*oni kenbai*) still memorizes each dance while singing *densuko denden densuko den* etc.: the syllables represent drum and cymbal strokes, whereas the melody to which they are sung is that of the flute. Thus by use of *shōga* one can learn simultaneously the dance, three instruments and their co-ordination.

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IV. Religious music

1. Introduction

David Waterhouse

Religious doctrines, beliefs and practices are generally not regarded as mutually exclusive in Japan; an immense variety of religions, sub-schools and sects co-exists and overlaps. Accordingly, there are many distinctive genres of religious music, and some performance traditions are of great antiquity and complexity. Only the most important kinds can be mentioned here.

Before the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the main religions were the indigenous cults of Shintō and various sinified forms of Buddhism. Confucianism, which became a religion in China, was a major intellectual and social force in Japan, influencing Japanese musical thought and practice, but it never took root as a distinct religion. At a folk level, ideas from Daoism greatly influenced Japanese religious belief, but it too was not a distinct religion in Japan.

Shintō (‘the way of the *kami*’) comprises a huge number of animistic or nature cults, in which purification and fertility ceremonies play a major part, along with shamanistic rituals of divination, faith healing etc. In the central group of myths the leading deity is the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu, enshrined at Ise; these myths provide the basis for the cult and rituals associated with the emperor. Shrines to several others of the countless *kami* (literally, ‘superiors’) are found nationwide. Shintō thinking has been much affected by Buddhism, with which it existed in a partly symbiotic relationship until the Meiji Restoration; by Confucianism and Daoist *yin-yang* philosophy; and by Japanese nationalism. However, Shintō cults and rituals are mostly local, while sharing many features. The later 19th century saw the official separation of Shintō and Buddhism and the creation of ‘State Shintō’ (*kokka* Shintō) at designated shrines. The term ‘Shrine Shintō’ (*jinja* Shintō) came to describe traditional, public shrines at all levels, as opposed to ‘Sect Shintō’ (*kyōha* Shintō), which referred to

new and often syncretic denominations, such as Konkōkyō, Tenrikyō and Ōmoto. Shrine Shintō has lost the privileged position it held before and during World War II, but it continues to flourish and redefine itself, and important kinds of ceremonial and festival music are actively maintained.

Buddhism was officially introduced from the Korean kingdom of Paekche in 538 CE (a correction of the traditional date 552) but was probably known earlier. It has always been understood in Japan as a Chinese rather than an Indian religion: the Buddhist canon used in Japan is in Chinese, and the main branches of Japanese Buddhism (Tendai, Shingon, Pure Land and Zen) were based on Chinese models. Nevertheless, Japanese Buddhism developed a highly distinctive character, each school or sub-school having its own doctrines and often elaborate liturgy, as well as its own types of music. In the Nara period (710–84), six schools, known collectively as the Nanto Rokushū, flourished in the capital: Sanron, Jōjitsu, Hossō, Kusha, Kegon and Ritsu. The Heian period (794–1185) saw the introduction of the Tendai and Shingon schools, emphasizing esoteric teachings of the *caryā* and *yoga* forms of Tantric Buddhism, though Tendai is formally grounded in the teachings of the *Lotus Sūtra* (the *Nichiren-shū*). At the same time, the teachings of Pure Land Buddhism, focussed on the celestial Buddha Amitābha (Jap. *Amida-butsu*), began to spread more widely. During the Kamakura period (1192–1333) two schools of Zen Buddhism (Rinzai and Sōtō) were introduced, and new schools based on Pure Land faith or on the *Lotus Sūtra* became popular. In succeeding centuries further developments included Ōbaku, a major new school of Zen. Buddhism suffered after 1868 but revived strongly in the later 20th century. Since World War II Japanese Buddhism (especially Zen) has also been spreading outside Japan.

Christianity has had much less influence than Shintō or Buddhism. Introduced by Jesuit missionaries soon after the first arrival of Europeans from Portugal in 1542 or 1543, it flourished for a while in the later 16th century, particularly in southern Japan, but was progressively banned in the early 17th century (the definitive exclusion came in 1639). However, along with elements of its music it continued to be practised secretly, more as a folk religion, by small groups in Kyūshū. It was reintroduced after the Meiji Restoration by Protestant as well as Catholic organizations and has had some impact on education as well as the new religions. The history of Christianity and Christian music in Japan thus falls into three distinct periods, of which only the first is discussed here.

2. Shintō

David Waterhouse

(i) Music of the imperial cult

All Shintō music traces its origins to the myth of an erotic dance performed by the goddess Ame no Uzume no Mikoto before the Rock Door of Heaven to entice out the Sun Goddess, who was hiding her light from the world and causing crops to fail. *Kagura*, written with Chinese characters meaning ‘music (and dance) for the gods’, was regarded as a branch of *wagaku*, music of Japanese origin, as opposed to various kinds of foreign music being introduced at the court; by 773 CE, as Shintō came to be formalized, we hear of *kagura* musicians at the imperial court. The palace *kagura*, known as *mi-kagura*, seems to have originated as an all-night sacred banquet, with songs and a modicum of dance. This took place in the Seishodō (from 859), or the Naishidokoro (from 1002 to the mid-19th century), halls of the imperial palace. From the period 1074–6 it became an annual event, and a reduced version is still

performed in mid-December (now in the Kashikodokoro). A slightly different version is performed for the *shinjōsai* (or *niinamesai*) festival in November, when the emperor commends new grain to the gods of Heaven and Earth. *Mi-kagura* songs have long been used also for functions at certain major shrines.

The cycle of songs (*kagura-uta*) was re-edited in the second quarter of the 17th century, after a hiatus caused by the civil wars of the 16th century. The complete repertory contains over 40 songs, but today only 12 are performed, in five groups, preceded by a short instrumental piece. Even so, a full performance occupies seven hours. The two songs of the second group, *Torimono no bu*, constitute the ritual core of the cycle, the later songs being regarded as lighter in character, relics of the old banquet tradition. Two (sometimes three) of the pieces have a separate section appended for a solo dancer (the *ninjō*). The text of each song falls into two parts, the *moto-uta* and the *sue-uta*; in each part the first verse is sung solo and the later verses in unison chorus. Instrumental accompaniment is provided by a Wagon (six-string zither), *kagura-bue* (transverse flute) and *hichiriki* (short cylindrical oboe). There are 20 singers in two groups, one for the *moto-uta*, one for the *sue-uta*. The lead singer in each group controls the pace of the performance with *shakubyōshi* (wooden clappers). The *kagura-uta* are in mostly free rhythm. The wind instruments play in unison, the *wagon* mostly playing simple arpeggio figures on open strings. The *kagura-uta* have a simple melodic structure, subtle in interpretation; only a single mode is used, based on the tone *ichikotsu*. In comparison to other Japanese singing, voice production is straight-toned and open. The notation is a system of neumes known as *hakase*, dating from the later 12th century. That used since the Meiji period is a reconstruction of this, the *sumifu*.

In addition to *mi-kagura*, music of the imperial cult includes other ancient song-types: *Azuma asobi*, *Ōnaobi-no-uta*, *Yamato-uta*, *Kume-uta*, *Ta-uta* and *Gosechi-no-mai*. In origin these are mostly secular court dances, though as dances some have fallen out of use. They may also be performed at major shrines, and *Gosechi-no-mai*, *Kume-uta* and *Ta-uta* have been used in enthronement ceremonies for the emperor.

(ii) Other Shintō music

The *kagura-uta* described above were used from ancient times for the *Chinkonsai*, a festival to honour and pacify dead souls. The word *kagura* probably derives from *kami-kura* (or *kamu-kura*), ‘seat for the gods’ (*kamiza*), and a central feature in Shintō festivals is the preparation of such a tabernacle, to which the *kami* may be invited with appropriate rituals of purification and supplication. Around the 14th century, followers of *Shugendō*, the orders of mountain ascetics (*yamabushi*), started to adapt formal *kagura* by the addition of dance and other theatrical elements related to the medieval *sarugaku-nō*. As a result, diverse but basically similar regional forms of *kagura* have developed, often referred to collectively as *sato-kagura* (‘village *kagura*’).

There are six main divisions of *sato-kagura*. *Miko-kagura* are widely distributed *kagura* performed by a purified woman, the *miko*, who herself was originally the *kamiza* and danced with ritual implements, such as a branch of sacred cleyera (*sakaki*), a Shintō wand (*gohei*), a fan or a bell tree (*suzu*). *Izumo-ryū kagura* are found especially in the Izumo region of western Japan; these involve a series of dances with ritual implements, followed by a masked *nō* play, in which gods appear on stage. *Ise-ryū kagura* is found especially around Kyoto but also in parts of northern Japan and elsewhere; it incorporates a lustral ceremony called *yudate*, in which hot water from a cauldron is sprinkled about and offered to the *kami*. Various dances follow. At the great shrines at Ise from the mid-17th century onwards,

pilgrims who made a suitably large donation were given a command performance, the *daidai kagura*; this custom was followed elsewhere. As Edo grew as a major urban centre, new kinds of *kagura* developed from the early 18th century at shrines in the area, incorporating elements of *yudate* and *miko* rituals, *daidai kagura*, *kyōgen* farce and juggling; these are called *Edo-kagura*. *Shishi-kagura* are found in many forms throughout Japan; they involve a dance with a lion's head as *kamiza*, or incorporate the lion dance into a *kabuki*-like performance. *Yamabushi-kagura* are types of *kagura* developed by *yamabushi*, preserved in north-east Japan in the region of Mt Hayachine (Iwate Prefecture); they were originally performed at the end of the year by wandering troupes. The varied repertory includes lion and other dances, and *kyōgen*.

The music of *sato-kagura* typically uses shrill transverse flutes, stick drums and other percussion (small metal idiophones, clappers etc.); rhythms are strong and lively. Originally it would be performed on open ground in or near Shintō shrines, but many shrines now have a special dance-hall (*kagura-dono*) with open sides. One of the oldest, at the Kasuga Shrine in Nara, was converted from a prayer hall in 1143.

Somewhat distinct from *sato-kagura* are *dengaku* and *matsuri-bayashi*. *Dengaku* ('field music'), refers to ritual performances, originally by peasants, to promote a good harvest. By the Heian period, it was being done at shrines and monasteries by professionals with shaven heads and religious garb, but by the end of the period in Kyoto it had turned into a large street parade with flutes and percussion, contributing to the development of *nō* drama. Many local varieties of *dengaku* have been preserved. *Matsuri-bayashi*, the music for local shrine festivals (*matsuri*), seems to have developed into something like its present form from the 16th century onwards. Generally there is a colourful street procession with heavy floats, wheeled (*dashi*) or shoulder-borne (*mikoshi*); the music uses transverse flutes, drums and gongs. The most famous kinds are for the Gion (Kyoto), Tenjin (Osaka) and Kanda (Edo/Tokyo) festivals, that for the Gion being a source for many others. An overlapping term, *furyū*, is often applied to several kinds of Shintō festival.

3. Buddhist

David Waterhouse

The traditional music of Japanese Buddhism comprises primarily chant (and its instrumental accompaniment) for the various liturgies (*hōe*; alternatively, *hōyō*). However, one should also include music for dances or dance-dramas on Buddhist themes; songs or ballads with Buddhist content; solo music for end-blown flute; as well as works on Buddhist themes by modern composers. Japanese Buddhist chant has distinctive tonal structures that were greatly influenced by court music (*gagaku*) but in turn influenced later secular music, especially for the theatre. It also has distinctive and ancient notation systems (see §III above). An immense wealth of source material has come to light in monastery and other archives; scholarly assimilation of this continues, especially in Japan. A need remains for more detailed historical and analytical comparison with the music of other Buddhist traditions and of other major religions.

(i) Chant

Following the introduction of Buddhism to Japan, the first detailed reference to its music is an edict of 720 CE, which sought to regulate text chanting according to that of the Tang monk Daorong. In China, new forms of Buddhist chant had developed, as Buddhist texts in Sanskrit were translated into Chinese; further modifications arose with their rendition in Japanese pronunciation. The Japanese term *shōmyō* renders Chinese *shengming*, which translates Sanskrit *śabda-vidyā*, referring to Brahmin priests' study of vocal sound with regard to the chanting of Vedic texts. By the early 13th century, however, *shōmyō* had become the customary general term in Japan for Buddhist chant (replacing the older term *bonbai*). Another name, frequently seen in the titles of *shōmyō* collections, is *gyosan*.

In 752, at the Eye-Opening Ceremony for the Great Buddha at the Kegon monastery of Tōdaiji in Nara, some 10,000 monks from the various Nara schools participated; but after the removal of the capital to Heian (Kyoto) in 794, the old Nara chant was gradually superseded by those of the Tendai and Shingon schools. In particular, the third head of Tendai, Ennin (794–864), brought back from China much knowledge of Chinese practice, especially in Tantric ritual, and introduced these at the Tendai headquarters on Hieizan. After him Enchin (814–91), nephew of Kūkai (774–835), the founder of Shingon, introduced new teachings and a new style of *shōmyō*, the Jimon-ryū, at the nearby Tendai monastery of Onjōji. Meanwhile Tōji, the main Shingon monastery in Kyoto, was already a separate ritual centre, and influence on Shingon *shōmyō* practice and theory was exerted by Kanchō (938–98), grandson of Emperor Uda. Interchange with the Nara schools cannot be documented after 980, and after that Tendai and Shingon increasingly followed their own paths. After the rebuilding of Tōdaiji (destroyed in the civil wars of the 12th century) Shingon and Tendai *shōmyō* were the basis for new Nara styles. These are preserved most distinctively in the lengthy *Shuni-e* or *o-mizutori* ceremony at Tōdaiji, with its vigorous chanting to sweep away defilements of the old year and usher in peace for the new one.

The 13th and 14th centuries saw many changes to *shōmyō*, as the centre of government moved to Kamakura in eastern Japan. The new Nara styles found favour there, and at Shōmyōji in Kanazawa, Kenna (1261–1338) won support for a combination of Shin-ryū and Myōnon'in-ryū, the two leading schools of Shingon and Tendai respectively. Meanwhile, Zen Buddhism was being introduced at Kamakura, and Pure Land schools such as Jōdo-shū and Jōdo shinshū, as well as Nichiren-shū, were developing individual styles. There was also renewed influence from court song and from various kinds of popular music. These cross-currents both affected the chant and led to new musical forms.

In western Japan, a major conclave at Ninnaji, Kyoto, in about 1145 is said to have recognized four distinct schools of Shingon *shōmyō*; earlier, Ryōnin (1073–1132) unified the various lineages of Tendai *shōmyō* from his ritual centre at Raigō-in, Ōhara, north of Kyoto, in 1109. Further reforms of Tendai *shōmyō* were due to Fujiwara no Moronaga (1138–92), the founder of Myōnon'in-ryū and an expert on *gagaku*; and to Tanchi (1163–?1237), who founded Shin-ryū ('New School') in opposition to the Ko-ryū ('Old School') of Jōshin (*fl* late 12th–early 13th centuries). (The name Shin-ryū of Shingon is written with a different first character.) Tanchi introduced a precise musical theory based on that for *gagaku*, with rules for modulation, rhythm and pitch, as well as a new five-tone notation system (*goin-bakase*), which made it possible to perform *shōmyō* and *gagaku* together. This last inspired later *goin-bakase* systems in both Tendai and Shingon, though the simpler *meyasu-bakase* has continued in use. Tanchi's Shin-ryū completely superseded Ko-ryū in the Ōhara tradition, and from the 14th century there were no major developments. However, the practice and transmission of Tendai *shōmyō* were gravely

affected by recurrent armed confrontations between Onjōji and Enryakuji (the main monastery on Hieizan) and by the destruction of Enryakuji and other Tendai establishments in 1571 by the warlord Oda Nobunaga (1534–82).

Shingon was spared this extreme fate. The Ninnaji conclave, converted by Kakushō (1129–69), had recognized Honsōō-in-ryū, Shinsōō-in-ryū, Daigo-ryū and Shin-ryū, of which the two former, practised at Ninnaji, derived their lineage from Kanchō; Daigo-ryū, practised at Daigoji, derived from Kanchō's fellow-pupil Genkō (911–95), with contributions also from Ninkai (955–1046), while Shin-ryū was credited to Shūkan (Daishin Shōnin, 12th century) by his pupil Kanken (mid-12th century). Shūkan himself had studied both the Ninnaji and Daigoji lines, and his style was supposedly introduced to Kōyasan (the spiritual centre of Shingon) between 1232 and 1237 by Shōshin (dates unknown). Another theory links the transcription of Kōyasan *shōmyō* to Ryūnen (*b* 1258) and the Nara monastery Saidaiji (by then affiliated with Shingon). Whatever the truth of the matter, in the 16th century the Daigoji and Saidaiji lineages disappeared, and in succeeding centuries the Ninnaji tradition also died out, so that, despite losses in the 17th century, the Shin-ryū of Kōyasan, usually known as Nanzan Shin-ryū, came to be dominant. Such older Shingon types, especially Shin-ryū, came to be labelled Kogi Shingon-ryū, while newer types, especially Buzan-ha (at Hasedera, outside Osaka) and Chizan-ha (at Chishaku-in, Kyoto), are called Shingi Shingon-ryū.

The less rigid rituals of the Pure Land schools also changed in later centuries and adopted elements of Ōhara school chant, alongside more popular types of religious song, while in the 17th century Ōbaku Zen introduced its own distinctive style, accompanied by loud percussion. Buddhism and its music suffered greatly after 1868, but a revival and reconstruction of Tendai chant was led by Yoshida Tsunezō (1872–1957) and Taki Dōnin (1890–1949). In Shingon the leaders were Yuga Kyōnyo (1847–1928) and Iwahara Taishin (1883–1965). Today, through public performances, recordings and studies the future of *shōmyō* seems assured.

Shōmyō pieces may be classified according to the doctrinal affiliation and rituals they represent; the nature (and language) of the text; modal and tonal structure; and rhythmic type. Thus, particular types of chant serve to expound the teaching (e.g. *kōshiki*), for praise and lamentation (*sandan*), intercession (*kigan* and *ekō*), confession (*sange*), offertory (*kuyō*), catechism (*rongi*) etc. There are also hymns, in Sanskrit (*bonsan*), Chinese (*kansan*) or Japanese (*wasan*). The invention of *wasan* is credited to Ennin, and of *kōshiki* to Genshin (Eshin Sōzu, 942–1017), who himself composed many *wasan*. Both types remained important across several schools of Japanese Buddhism. Older treatises on *shōmyō* devote much attention to temperament (*onritsu*) in relation to Chinese theory (especially the *ritsu-ryo* scale classification), one influential text being *Shittanzō* by the Tendai master Annen (841–84). Actual practice has tended to be less fixed, and more important in the tonal structures of *shōmyō*, and indeed of all traditional Japanese music, are the *senritsukei*, short melodic units that are strung together in chains and are identified with individual names. Rhythmically, most *shōmyō* pieces are in free time (*jokyoku*), but a few have fixed metre (*teikyoku*) or combine both (*gukyoku*).

(ii) Other Buddhist music

Music for Buddhist dances and dance-dramas embraces an immense variety of forms, including the extinct *gigaku* (introduced from Korea in the early 7th century), certain court dances (*bugaku*) and *nō* plays, as well as festivals, processions and other entertainments (*shōryō-e*, *ennen*, *gyōdō* etc.). Many entail the use of masks. Among non-liturgical Buddhist ballads and songs, *mōsō-biwa* is a recitation by

blind monks accompanying themselves on the short lute. Introduced to Japan in the 7th century, it developed above all within Tendai and inspired later *biwa* narrative ballad genres, notably *heikyoku*, but many details of its history remain unclear. Other types of Buddhist song include kinds of chant and dance incorporating the *nenbutsu*, the Pure Land formula of invocation to Amida-butsu; *go-eika*, pilgrims' songs; *sōga* (or *enkyoku*), feast songs of the 14th–15th centuries, with metrical texts modelled on *kōshiki*; *sekkyō* (or *uta-sekkyō*), expositions of Buddhist teaching, sung by professional performers in a *kabuki*-influenced style and even setting, especially in the late 17th and earlier 18th centuries; and *saimon* (or *uta-saimon*), a somewhat similar form, at its height during the same period but inspired by Shingon and Shugendō and performed either as street music or as part of puppet plays. The solo repertory (*honkyoku*) for end-blown flute (*shakuhachi*), popular from the 17th century, is above all on Buddhist themes and was disseminated by mendicant friars of the Fuke-shū, a Zen-inspired sect (see §II, 5 above). Lastly, modern Japanese composers who have written on Buddhist themes include Mayuzumi Toshirō (1929–97) and Fukushima Kazuo (*b* 1930).

4. 16th- and 17th-century Christian music

David Waterhouse

Francis Xavier landed in Kagoshima, Kyūshū, in 1549, with gifts that included a musical instrument (a clavichord?), and established at Yamaguchi the first of a series of Christian churches in Japan. As the number of converts increased, provision was made to render the liturgy in Japanese and to train the Japanese in Western music, including both singing and instrumental playing; dramatized versions of Bible stories were also performed. By 1580 there were some 200 churches in western Japan, as well as two *seminários* and a *colégio*, founded by Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606). In 1579 Valignano brought a pair of organs from Goa, and these, as well as other keyboard and string instruments, were used in services and at the seminaries.

The highlight of the Jesuit mission was an embassy to Rome, planned by Valignano. Four samurai boys from Kyūshū, with escorts, left Nagasaki in February 1582, reached Lisbon in August 1584 and gradually made their way to Rome, attending masses and giving musical performances along the route. They were received by Felipe II of Spain, had an audience with Gregory XIII (Pope, 1572–85) and attended the installation of his successor, Sixtus V (Pope, 1585–90). They attracted attention everywhere, even having their portraits painted by Jacopo Tintoretto (1518–94). They finally returned to Japan in 1590, and the following year they were received by Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–98), whom they impressed with their ability in Western music. Over the next 20 years Christian missions in Japan were at their height, one achievement being the publication in Nagasaki of *Manuale ad sacramenta ecclesiae ministrandum* (1605), printed in red and black with many pages of musical notation. However, both Hideyoshi and his successor Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616) became suspicious, particularly after the arrival of Dominican (1592) and Franciscan (1593) missionaries from Manila. After a series of persecutions, a general order in 1614 banned all missionary activity, and new, more intense persecutions followed in the 1620s and 30s. A definitive order of 1639 brought to an end this first period of Christianity and its music in Japan, all remaining missionaries and their converts being evacuated to Macao, Manila or elsewhere.

5. New religions

Charles Rowe

Shin shūkyō (‘new religions’) is a term applied to a number of independent religions founded in Japan from the early 19th century, with sources in such traditions as mountain cults, popular moral cultivation movements and the activities of lay believers of Nichiren Buddhism. Several of these religions maintain their own distinctive musical traditions.

Kurozumikyō (founded 1814) has from 1879 used *kibigaku*, a new music created by *gagaku* musician Kishimoto Yoshihide (1821–90). *Kibigaku* features the instruments of the *tōgaku* genre of *gagaku* but without the four-string lute *biwa*. In *kibigaku* (unlike *gagaku*) the most important part is given to the thirteen-string *koto*.

In 1888 *kibigaku* was introduced into the religion Konkōkyō (founded 1859) by Kishimoto’s pupil Obara Otondo (1873–1941). In 1914 Obara, who was also a student of *gagaku*, created a unique ritual music for Konkōkyō, to which he gave the name *chūseigaku*. Like *kibigaku*, *chūseigaku* gives the *koto* a more prominent part than does *gagaku*. Unlike *kibigaku*, however, *chūseigaku* uses the *biwa* in its instrumental pieces, while in the vocal compositions the instruments of court *kagura* are used.

Tenrikyō (founded 1838) features a cycle of songs, called the *mikagur-auta*, said to have been revealed to the founder Nakayama Miki (1798–1887) beginning in 1867. The combination of instruments used in accompanying the songs is unique: 13-string *koto*, three-string *shamisen* lute, bowed *kokyū* lute (these three played by women), bamboo *fue* flute, hourglass-shaped *kotsuzumi* hand drum, *surigane* gong, *chanpon* cymbals, *hyōshigi* wooden clappers and large *taiko* drum (these played by men).

Ōmoto (founded 1892) has from 1909 used the two-string *yakumo-goto* zither to accompany its liturgies. This instrument, which enjoyed some popularity in western Japan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, is now rare outside Ōmoto.

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V. Court music

Allan Marett

Gagaku, the ancient traditional music of the Japanese court, today comprises the following repertories: *tōgaku*, *komagaku*, *saibara*, *rōei* and Shintō ritual music and dance. The two Chinese characters used to write *gagaku* (literally ‘elegant music’) were originally used in China to signify Confucian ritual music.

1. History

In Japanese usage, the term *gagaku* may be traced back to the establishment in 701 CE of a government bureau, the Gagaku-ryō (also known as Utamai-no-tsukasa or Uta-ryō) to regulate the performance and teaching of music and dance at the Japanese court. Although the Chinese term *yayue* (of which *gagaku* is the Japanese reading) referred originally to the music of the Confucian ritual (*see* China, People’s Republic of), by the time the Japanese came in contact with it, the term had changed its meaning. A ‘new *yayue*’, comprising popular Chinese music and foreign entertainment music (including music from India, from the Central Asian states of Kuqa, Samarkand, Kashgar, Bukhara and Turfan, and from Korea), held sway at the Chinese court. The Japanese use of the term *gagaku* to describe this body of music was thus very much in keeping with contemporary Chinese usage.

The principal repertories regulated by the Gagaku-ryō were *wagaku* (Japanese music), *sankangaku* (music and dance of the three Korean kingdoms of Koguryŏ, Paekche and Silla), *tōgaku* (music and dance from Tang China) and a number of smaller repertories of imported music and dance such as *toragaku*, *gigaku*, and *rin'yūgaku*. Of these, the *sankangaku* and *gigaku* repertories were the oldest, dating from the Asuka period (552–645) or earlier. Although introduced via the Korean peninsula, it is likely that these genres strongly reflected Chinese practice predating the period of direct contact with China during the Nara (710–84) and early Heian (794–898) periods. By the mid-8th century, the *tōgaku* repertory was the dominant division, as it is within present-day *gagaku*.

Sources for the study of the early history of *gagaku* are particularly rich. A body of musical scores in tablature dating from the 8th century onwards sheds light both on the history of the *gagaku* tradition in Japan and on the music of China during the Tang period (618–907). While only one surviving Chinese score, the 10th-century lute-score *Dunhuang pipa pu*, records any of this repertory in notation, in Japan numerous musical scores that record the Chinese and other repertories played at the Japanese court survive from as early as the mid-8th century. These include the *Tempyō biwa-fu* (747) for four-string lute; the *Biwa shochōshi-bon*, an early 10th-century score containing notation originally written by the Chinese lute master Lian Chengwu for his Japanese pupil Fujiwara no Sadatoshi in Suzhou in 834; the *Gogen biwa-fu*, notations for five-string lute of approximately 11th-century date based on materials of the 8th to the 9th century; and the *Hakūga no fue-fu*, notations for flute edited in 966, parts of which date back to the early 9th century. The Shōsōin, a repository built in 756 to house items originally belonging to the Emperor Shōmu, includes instruments used in the elaborate ceremony performed for the consecration of the Great Buddha of Tōdaiji in 752.

It was during the 9th century that the distinction between *tōgaku* and *komagaku* current in present-day *gagaku* was created. *Tōgaku*, which was designated 'Music of the Left' (*sahō*), included the ancient repertories of *tōgaku* (Chinese music) and *rin'yūgaku* (music from South-east Asia). *Komagaku*, the 'Music of the Right' (*uhō*), included *sankangaku* (Korean music) and *bokkaigaku* (music and dance from Bohai, a country in the area of Manchuria). Many anomalies remained, however: some *tōgaku* items were included in the *komagaku* repertory, and both repertories included pieces that appear to have been composed by Japanese musicians and dancers in the early centuries of the tradition on Japanese soil.

By the late 9th century, Japanese contact with China had virtually ceased. Although some modification of the music occurred, including a reduction in the number of instruments and modes, evidence from early scores suggests that even until the mid-10th century the shape of the melodies imported from China remained relatively unchanged. Tang-period Chinese musical practice appears, moreover, to have been sustained, albeit with further modification, until at least the end of the 12th century.

During the Heian period (794–1185), *gagaku* flourished under court patronage as part of a rich calendar of ceremonies and festivals. Performances were by both high-ranking noblemen and the professional musicians who staffed the Gakusho (Gakuso), the new government department established in the early to mid-10th century to regulate the performance of music and dance at court. The Heian period also saw the creation of a number of new genres, including two that survive to the present: *saibara* (originally Japanese folk-texts set to the melodies of *tōgaku* and *komagaku*) and *rōei* (a tradition of singing Chinese poetry).

Following the transfer of political power from the court to the shogunate at the beginning of the Kamakura period (1192–1333), *gagaku* continued to flourish, though the loss of imperial power led to a corresponding reduction in the scale of the ceremonies sponsored by the court. There is evidence that by the early 14th century *tōgaku* was beginning to evolve in the direction of present-day practice, as the melodies for the two key melodic instruments, the *ryūteki* and *hichiriki*, began to be transformed into the new formula-based melodies that dominate modern performances, and the original melodies began to fade into the overall texture (see below).

From the mid-15th century, a series of wars led to the virtual destruction of the culture of the imperial court. The song genres *saibara* and *rōei* were lost, and the *tōgaku* and *komagaku* traditions were severely damaged. With the return of peace at the beginning of the 17th century, movements were made to re-establish *gagaku* at the court. Reconstruction of the *saibara* tradition began in 1626 and continued through the 18th and 19th centuries. The early years of the 19th century saw the resurrection of many of the long-extinct genres of vocal ceremonial music associated with imperial ritual, including *azuma asobi* (1813), *kume-uta* (1818) and *yamato-uta* (1848). Refurbishment of the *rōei* repertory occurred in the latter decades of the 19th century.

With the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the emperor was restored as head of state and the capital moved to Tokyo. In 1870, musicians from Kyoto, Nara and Osaka were brought there and ordered to reconcile differences in order to standardize the *gagaku* tradition. The versions of pieces chosen from the repertories of each group of musicians at that time, together with any reconstructed pieces, were recorded in the standardized part-scores completed in 1876 and 1888. Today, these form the basis of the current *gagaku* repertories. During the period of standardization, an ideology that claimed that the *gagaku* tradition remained unchanged since ancient times was invented and promulgated. Even after the discrediting of this nationalist propaganda after World War II, the image of *gagaku* as a static, unchanging symbol of the imperial house remains strong.

At present, the staff of the music department of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo includes about 20 male musicians, whose duties comprise both ceremonial and non-ceremonial performances. Ceremonial performances accompany various Shintō festivals at court, the most important of which feature only the ritual repertories, such as *kagura*, *azuma asobi*, *yamato-uta* and *kume-uta*. Many lesser ceremonies, such as the regular public dance performances at the Meiji shrine, also use compositions from the *tōgaku* and *komagaku* repertories. Exceptional events in the imperial family such as births, weddings or deaths also require special *gagaku* performances, as do some state occasions. Non-ceremonial performances include those for public radio and television, and the spring and autumn concerts given annually at the Music Building in the Imperial Palace.

There are also several professional, semi-professional or amateur groups, including those attached to the imperial shrine at Ise and the Shitennōji temple in Osaka. The Tōkyō Gakuso, a professional ensemble the core of which is made up of members or former members of the imperial household, has in recent years done much to increase the profile of *gagaku* through public concerts both in Japan and overseas and through commercial recordings.

For most Japanese, however, *gagaku* remains a remote and arcane music. In the post-war period, it was not subject to the same resurgence of interest as other traditional forms of Japanese music, dance and theatre, and without the support of the state might well have declined to the point of virtual extinction.

However, partly because of the appeal of its dissonant texture to modernist sensibilities, during the second half of the 20th century it became a source of inspiration for Western composers such as Messiaen and Stockhausen, as well as for many Japanese composers.

2. Repertory

The *tōgaku* repertory is classified into *kangen* (concert music) or *bugaku* (music for dance). *Bugaku* comprises not only pieces from the *tōgaku* repertory but also those of *komagaku*: danced *tōgaku* pieces continue to be classified as 'Dances of the Left' (*sahō*, *samai*), danced *komagaku* pieces as 'Dances of the Right' (*uhō*, *umai*). The current repertory of *tōgaku* comprises some 80 *kangen* pieces (including transposed pieces that occur in more than one mode) and some 30 *bugaku* items. While some *tōgaku* pieces are performed in both *kangen* and *bugaku* versions, others belong exclusively to one or other division.

The *kangen* ensemble comprises: wind instruments, *ryūteki*, *hichiriki* and *shō*; string instruments, *biwa* and *gakusō*; and percussion instruments, *kakko*, *shōko* and *taiko* (see §3 below for details of instruments). String instruments are nowadays omitted in the performance of *bugaku*.

Tōgaku pieces are performed in six melodic modes: *ichikotsuchō*, *hyōjō*, *sōjō*, *ōshikichō*, *banshikichō* and *taishikichō*, which are grouped into two modal-types, *ryo* and *ritsu* (*seeunder* Mode, §V, 5).

Pieces are classified according to size as *taikyoku* (large pieces), *chūkyokū* (middle-sized pieces) or *shōkyoku* (small pieces). *Taikyoku*, which are suites in several movements, are no longer included in the *kangen* style and are now rarely performed in their entirety as *bugaku*.

Tōgaku is also divided into *kogaku* (old music) and *shingaku* (new music), an ancient distinction based on the date at which pieces entered the Tang Chinese repertory. The *ikko*, a drum formerly used for *kogaku*, has fallen out of use; there is now little to distinguish these categories in modern performance practice.

All *komagaku* items in the current repertory of 28 pieces accompany dance. The ensemble comprises only winds (*komabue*, *hichiriki*) and percussion (*san-no-tsuzumi*, *shōko* and *taiko*). In the past, string instruments were included in the ensemble, and concert performances (*kangen*) of *komagaku* were given. *Komagaku* pieces are performed in three modes: *koma-ichikotsuchō*, *koma-hyōjō*, and *koma-sōjō*.

The vocal repertories of *gagaku* comprise *saibara*, *rōei* and Shintō ritual music. The current *saibara* repertory is made up of six pieces that are performed by a chorus accompanied by an ensemble made up of *ryūteki*, *hichiriki*, *shō*, *biwa*, *gakusō* and *shakubyōshi*. *Saibara* pieces may be in either *ryo* (4 pieces) or *ritsu* (2 pieces) modes. The *rōei* repertory comprises 14 items. As in *saibara*, there is a solo vocal incipit accompanied only by *shakūbyōshi*, at the end of which the chorus enters, closely doubled by *ryūteki*, *hichiriki* and *shō*. The vocal melodies are said to resemble those of Buddhist chant, *shōmyō*. The music for Shintō ceremonies performed at court includes the following repertories: *kagura*, *azuma asobi*, *yamato-uta* and *kume-uta*. Each comprises songs performed by a chorus accompanied by an instrumental ensemble, instrumental interludes and dances. For *kagura*, *yamato-uta* and *kume-uta*, the instrumental ensemble is made up of *kagurabue*, *hichiriki*, *wagon* and *shakūbyōshi*. In *azuma asobi*, the *kagurabue* is replaced by a *komabue*.

3. Instruments

Three flutes, all of similar construction, are used in the performance of *gagaku*. The *ryūteki*, a transverse bamboo flute about 40 cm in length, with seven finger-holes, is used in *tōgaku* (both *kangen* and *bugaku*), *saibara* and *rōei*. In *tōgaku*, the *ryūteki*, together with the *hichiriki*, dominates the ensemble. Its melodies are characterized by intricate melodic formulae and frequent octave leaps, the performance of which is facilitated by the instrument's large bore and finger-holes. In both *saibara* and *rōei*, the flute closely follows the vocal melody, but in the former, the line is embellished with formulae gleaned from *tōgaku* practice. The *komabue* is a transverse bamboo flute with six finger-holes used in *komagaku* and *azuma asobi*. Shorter (about 36 cm) and narrower in bore than the *ryūteki*, it sounds a tone higher in pitch. Like the *ryūteki*, the *komabue* performs a highly formulaic melody, in heterophony with the *hichiriki*. The *kagurabue* is a transverse bamboo flute with six finger-holes used in the ritual repertories *kagura*, *yamato-uta* and *kume-uta*. It is longer (45 cm) and slimmer than the *ryūteki*.

The Hichiriki, a small, almost cylindrical, double-reed pipe with nine finger-holes, seven in the front and two at the back, is used in all *gagaku* repertories. Together with the flute, it is the principal melodic instrument. The relative largeness of the reed in comparison with the air column permits the player to bend pitches in order to meet the melodic and modal requirements of the melodies characteristic of each genre.

The Shō, a small free-reed mouth-organ with 17 bamboo pipes (two of which are mute) set into a wind chamber, is used in *tōgaku*, *saibara* and *rōei*. When the player closes the holes on any of the 15 sounding pipes and blows and sucks air into the chamber, free reeds near the base of the pipe are sounded. In performing *tōgaku*, the *shō* produces five or six-note harmonic clusters (*aitake*) based on the circle of 5ths. Only one pitch is notated, in general the lowest note of each cluster. While in modern practice the *shō* is regarded as a harmonic rather than a melodic instrument and provides a richly dissonant texture against which the *ryūteki* and *hichiriki* perform their melodies, it is this instrument, together with the *biwa*, that in its notated pitches most accurately preserves the original melodies imported from Tang China. In *saibara* and *rōei*, the *shō* does not use *aitake* but rather follows the sung melody, doubling it in octaves or occasionally 5ths.

The three string instruments used in *gagaku* are the *biwa*, *gakusō* and *wagon*. The Biwa is a four-string lute played with a large plectrum (see also §II, 3 above). Like the *shō*, its part in *tōgaku* is based on the original Tang melodies. This ancient melody is carried as the highest note of an arpeggio created by the player sweeping the plectrum across the strings of the instrument from lowest to highest, sounding all open strings below that on which the notated pitch occurs. The effect of these strong arpeggios is, in modern practice, more rhythmic than melodic.

The *gakusō* (also known as *sō*, *sō-no-koto*, or simply Koto) is a long zither with 13 silk strings of equal thickness and 13 movable bridges (see also §II, 4 above). Owing to a deterioration of the tradition, the *gakusō* plays only in pentatonic modes executed on open-string tunings. For the most part the *gakusō* plays one of two formulaic patterns, *shizugaki* or *hayagaki*, alternating with single notes. The player wears plectra on the fingers of the right hand. In the Heian period, left-hand pressure was applied to the left of the bridges to alter the pitch of strings and produce ornaments, but this practice has long fallen into disuse.

The Wagon is a six-string zither, believed to be indigenous to Japan, used in the music of the various Shintō rituals (see §IV, 2 above). The player holds a plectrum in the right hand and plays rapid arpeggios across the strings. With the left hand, single strings are plucked individually or in formulaic patterns.

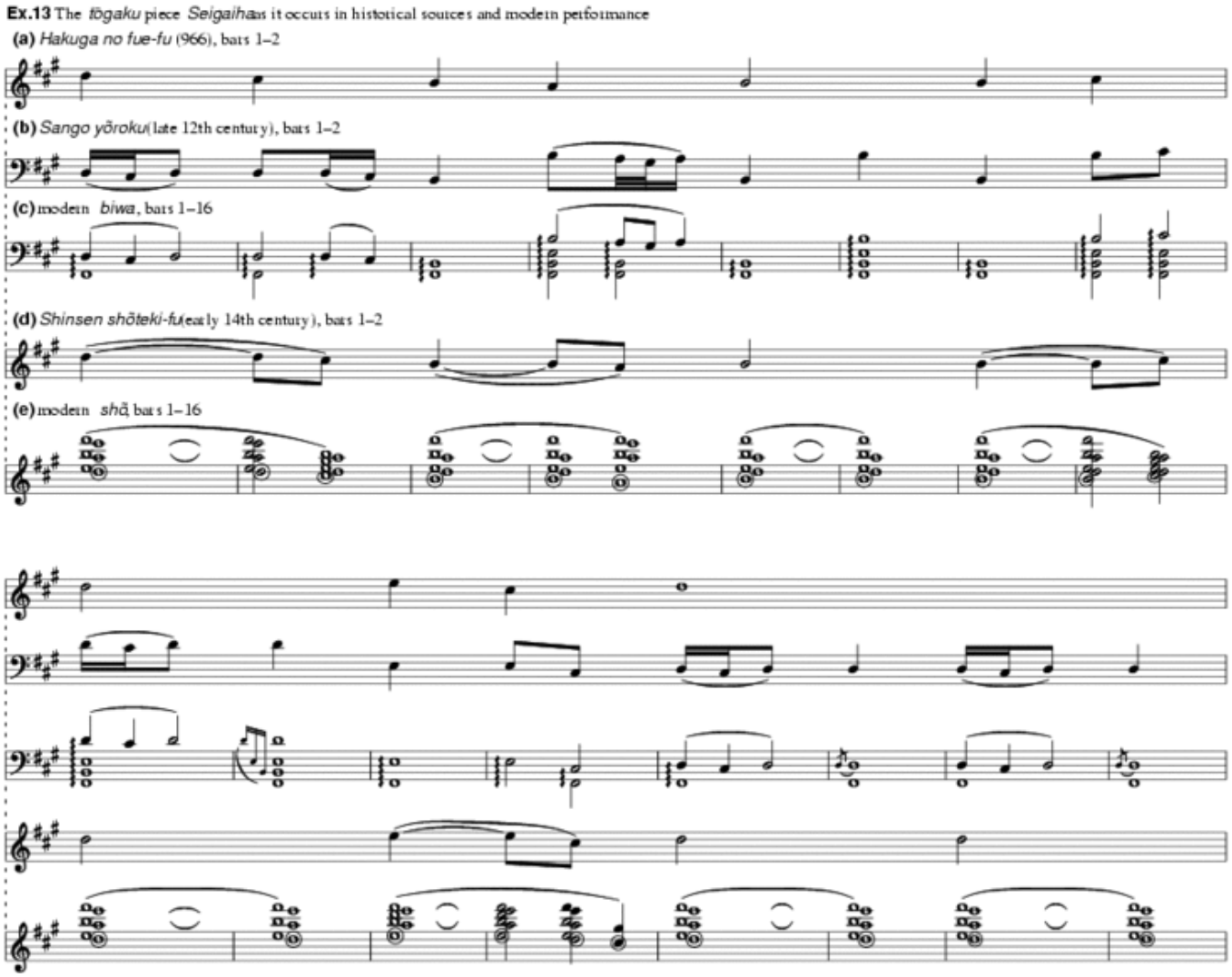
In both *tōgaku* and *komagaku*, three percussion instruments articulate the many rhythmic patterns that form the basis of a variety of rhythmic modes. The trio of *kakko*, *shōko* and *taiko* used in *tōgaku* is modified in *komagaku* by the replacement of the *kakko* with the *san-no-tsuzumi*. The *kakko* is a small barrel-drum placed on a stand; its two heads of deer skin are secured to either end of the body by laces. Small drumsticks held in both of the player's hands are used to produce three different kinds of stroke; a single stroke with the right stick (*sei*), a slow accelerating roll played with the left stick alone (*katarai*) and a slow roll executed by the alternation of both sticks (*mororai*). The *shōko* is a small gong, set in a laquered stand. Two long sticks are used to produce three kinds of stroke. The *taiko* is a large suspended drum that comes in three varieties, *dadaiko*, *ninaidaiko* and *tsuridaiko*. Two heads of ox hide are tacked onto a frame. Padded sticks are used to produce two strokes, a weaker 'female' stroke performed with the left hand (*mebachi*) and a stronger 'male' stroke produced by the right (*obachi*). The *san-no-tsuzumi* is an hourglass-shaped drum played with a single stick. The only other percussion instrument used in *gagaku* is the *shakubyōshi*, a pair of wooden clappers played by the lead singer in the performance of *saibara* and the music for Shintō rituals.

4. Performing practice and historical change

Viewed from the perspective of historical development, the key to understanding the structure of *tōgaku* today is the part played by *shō* and *biwa*, the two instruments that most accurately preserve the melodies originally imported from Tang China. Performed extremely slowly, and obscured by unwritten accretions, these ancient melodies have come to assume a structural rather than a melodic role; this role has been likened to that of the *cantus firmus* of 15th century European plainchant masses. They are not, as has sometimes been stated, an 'abstraction' of the melodies carried by *ryūteki* and *hichiriki*, but the historical bedrock out of which these newer melodies evolved.

The melodies carried by the *ryūteki* and *hichiriki* dominate modern *tōgaku*. It is not surprising, therefore, that they are often taken as the key to understanding its structure. These melodies are not, however, part of the legacy from China, having come into being after the end of the Heian period at a period when the *tōgaku* tradition was already in decline. The first signs of this transformation can be seen as early as the 14th century. These new melodies bear no audible resemblance to the original Tang melodies and, unlike the parts carried by *shō* and *biwa*, depart in marked ways from the modal practice of Tang China.

Ex.13a shows the earliest surviving version of *Seigaiha*, a piece first mentioned by the Tang Chinese poet Li Bai (Li Po) and performed to this day in the *tōgaku* repertory. This form of the melody, preserved in the 10th-century source *Hakuga no fue-fu*, is probably little changed from that of Tang China. Ex.13*b* shows the form of the melody played by the *biwa* in the late 12th century and ex.13*d* the form played by the *shō* in the early 14th century. While both these later versions exhibit increased amounts of decoration, ornamental practice is circumscribed and supports Chinese modal practice.



Ex.13 The tōgaku item Seigaiha as it occurs in historical sources and modern performance (a) Hakuga no fue-fu(966), bars 1–2 (b) Sango yōroku (late 12th century), bars 1–2 (c) modern biwa, bars 1–16 (d) Shinsen shōteki-fu(early 14th century), bars 1–2 (e) modern shō, bars 1–16

In modern performing practice, these melodies are transformed into structural rather than melodic elements. Exx.13*c* and 13*e* show what has become of the melody in the modern practice of *biwa* and *shō* respectively. The first aspect that is transformed is tempo; present-day tempos of *tōgaku* items are about four times slower than they would have been in the 12th century (this is reflected in quadrupling of note values in exx.13*c* and 13*e*). As a result, all but the initial notes of the mordent and suspension figurations executed under a single stroke of the plectrum by the *biwa* (marked by a slur in ex.13*c*) are rendered inaudible in modern ensemble performances; the string has stopped vibrating before the later fingerings are executed. The second transformation involves the addition of unwritten accretions to the original melodic line: the *shō* (ex.13*e*) adds five notes above the original melody note (the original pitches are circled in ex.13*e*) to make six-note cluster chords (*aitake*); the *biwa* (ex.13*c*) adds a drone comprising the pitches of all open strings below that on which the melody is played. The change in tempo, together with the obscuring of the original melodic line through unwritten accretions, contribute to the loss of any aural perception of the original melody from China as it becomes buried within the texture of modern *tōgaku*.

Any doubts that the lines carried today in the *shō* and *biwa* parts were melodies in the 12th century and earlier (rather than structural elements as they are today) were laid to rest by the work of Markham on early *saibara* sources. Early sources frequently claimed that *saibara* melodies were the same as those of certain named *tōgaku* and *komagaku* pieces. Viewed from the perspective of modern performing practice, such claims make little sense, since the melodies of the present-day versions of the *tōgaku*/*komagaku* pieces are clearly different from their *saibara* pairs. Comparison of their forms in Heian period sources, however, clearly reveals their identity.

Just as the evolution of *tōgaku* can be traced from the Heian period to the present, so too can the development of *saibara*. The late Heian forms of *saibara* melodies underwent development through the incorporation into the vocal line of formulae, perhaps related to those of Buddhist chant, in much the same ways as the melodies of *tōgaku* underwent change by the incorporation of new melodic formulae. No analysis of the development of *rōei* or *komagaku* has been undertaken to date. Analysis of *rōei* is hampered by a current lack of research on early notations, and analysis of *komagaku* by the fact that the present-day performing practice of *komagaku* includes neither of the instruments *shō* or *biwa* that might (on the basis of what is known of *tōgaku*) be expected to preserve the original melodies. The absence of these ancient melodies, from which the formulaic melodies of *komabue* and *hichiriki* presumably evolved, effectively cuts modern *komagaku* off from its historical roots. Restoration of our understanding of the historical dimensions of *komagaku* can now only be made by reference to textual sources.

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VI. Theatre music

1. ‘NŌ’

Richard Emmert

This performance form combines elements of dance, drama, music and poetry into a highly structured stage art. Mainly based in the cities of Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Nagoya, it is performed throughout the country by professional artists (almost entirely men), many of whom are carriers of the tradition as passed down through family lines for numerous generations. There is also a wide following of both male and female amateur performers throughout the country who practise and perform one or several aspects of the form. An art that developed in Japan’s medieval period, it has in turn been a major influence on later performance arts, most notably *kabuki* theatre and the music of the *koto*.

(i) History

Nō developed into its present form during the 14th and 15th centuries under the leadership of the distinguished performer-playwrights Kan’ami (1333–84) and his son Zeami (?1363–?1443). Zeami in particular wrote many plays that are still performed in today’s classical repertory of some 250 pieces.

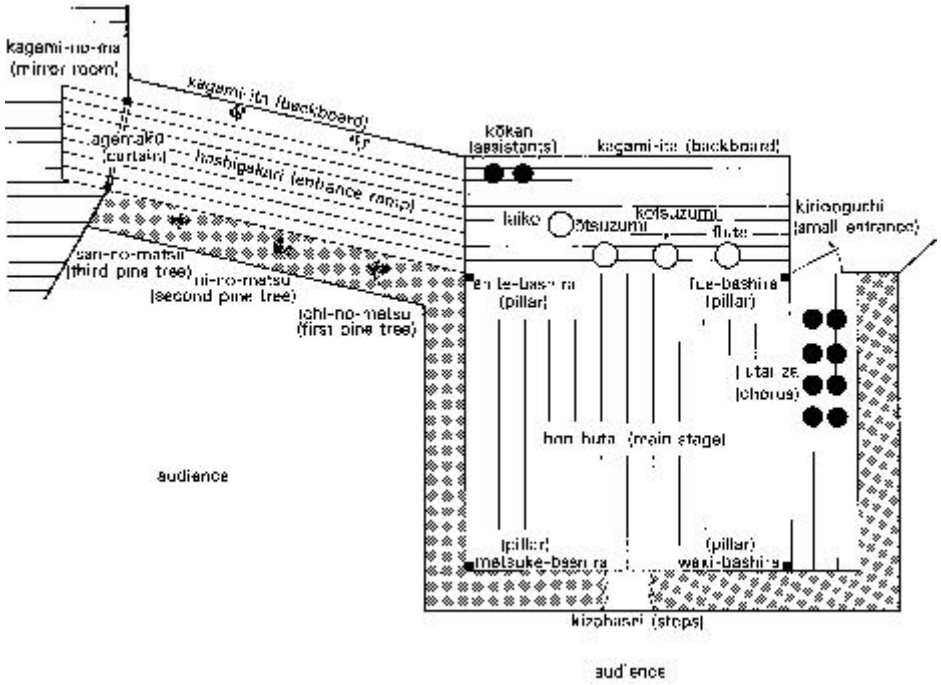
Known formerly as *sarugaku*, *nō* began to flourish in the late 14th century when the military shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu became the major patron of Zeami and his troupe. Subsequent shoguns also patronized different performers and troupes. In the Edo period (1603–1868), *nō* became the official performance art (*shikigaku*) of the military government. Feudal military lords throughout the country supported their own troupes, and many studied and performed the art themselves.

With the societal reforms of the Meiji period (1868–1912), *nō* lost its governmental patronage and was left to fend for itself. However, enough performers regrouped, found private sponsors and began teaching amateurs that it flourished again. During and immediately after World War II, *nō* once more faced a crisis period in which its continuation was in doubt. Again, however, enough private patrons and amateur students supported professional performers, and the art has since continued to flourish.

There are approximately 1500 professional performers who currently make their living through performing and teaching *nō*. Tokyo boasts six major *nō* theatres, including the National Nō Theatre, which opened in 1983. Most major cities have *nō* theatres or, at least, theatres that can be easily rearranged to accommodate performances. The continuing popularity of summer outdoor torchlight *nō* performances, often with audiences of several thousand people, further attests to the wide respect in which *nō* is held.

(ii) Performing practice

The *nō* stage is square with a ramp leading to it from backstage, over which the characters make their entrances and exits. There is only one curtain, which hangs at the end of the ramp. Stages were formerly outside and covered with a long sloping roof; in the late 19th century, however, most *nō* stages were moved inside a dedicated theatre building (*nōgakudō*), still maintaining the roof above the stage under the roof of the theatre itself and with the stage remaining open on two sides (fig.28 and8).



Stage plan of a nō theatre

After S. Kishibe

After S. Kishibe

The main character of a *nō* play is called the *shite*, who sometimes appears with companion characters called *tsure*. The secondary actor (*waki*) is often a travelling priest whose questioning of the main character is important in developing the story line (fig.8). He also appears with a companion (*waki-tsure*). An interlude actor called *ai* or *ai-kyōgen* also often appears as a local person who gives further background to the *waki* (and thus to the audience) in order to understand the situation of the *shite*. In addition, a chorus (*jiutai*), usually of eight people, kneels at the side of the stage and narrates the background and the story itself, sometimes describing a character’s thoughts or emotions or even singing lines for a character. Four instrumentalists (known collectively as *hayashi*) sit at the back of the stage, playing a transverse flute (*nōkan*), an hourglass-shaped drum held at the shoulder (*kotsuzumi*; fig.9), a slightly larger hourglass-shaped drum placed on the lap (*ōtsuzumi*), and a barrel-shaped drum placed on a small floor stand and played with two sticks (*taiko*; fig.10).

Nō performance with shite (principal actor) and waki (second principal actor) in the foreground, and instrumental ensemble behind, including (left to right) taiko (barrel drum), ōtsuzumi and kotsuzumi (hourglass drums), and nōkan (flute), with the jiutai (chorus) to the right

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Taiko (barrel drum)

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There are five categories of play: god plays, warrior plays, plays featuring young beautiful women, miscellaneous plays, notably featuring contemporary characters, including mad-women, and plays featuring supernatural beings, animals or other typical ending plays. During the Edo period, a full day's programme consisted of the initial ritual piece, *Okina*, followed by one play from each category, in the above order. One comic *kyōgen* play would be presented between each *nō*. Though currently quite rare, such a programme would take 10 to 12 hours to complete.

More common are weekend afternoon programmes consisting of two or three *nō* plays interspersed with one or two *kyōgen* plays, or evening weekday programmes consisting of one or two *nō* plays preceded or interspersed with one *kyōgen* play.

Plays are either of one act (*ba*) or two, depending on the number of times the *shite* makes an appearance. These acts are in turn divided into scenes (*dan*). In the most formal structure, an act is divided into five scenes: *waki* entrance, *shite* entrance, *waki-shite* exchange, action of the *shite* and the departure of the *shite*; however, this exact structure of scenes is rare. Scenes in turn are broken into the most important building blocks, known as *shōdan*. Each *shōdan* has a name designating poetic, musical and sometimes kinetic forms. For example, *ageuta* generally features six to ten poetic lines of 7+5 syllables each, and has a standard, matching musical rhythm (*hiranori*) sung mainly in the high register. *Kuse*, on the other hand, usually features poetic lines that are occasionally of 7+5 syllables but will often break from that structure and become more complicated (see §(v) below). Kinetically, many *kuse* follow typical floor patterns that create triangles, zigzags and circles, all with numerous variations particular to the play.

(iii) Chant

Nō chant (*utai*) can be divided into three types: melodic (*yowagin* or *wagin*), dynamic (*tsuyogin* or *gōgin*) and stylized speech (*kotoba*). Melodic chant is the style closest to the concept of song. It is based on three pitch areas (high, medium and low) in which the central pitches of each are, in principle, a 4th apart. Also featured is an embellishment pattern with a pitch approximately a minor 3rd above the high pitch. The melodies created follow typical structures within a segment. Melodic movement between the medium and low pitches is direct, although moving from the medium to the high generally requires passing through an auxiliary pitch between the two, while moving from the high back to the low involves rising to an auxiliary pitch above the high pitch.

Dynamic chant is a forceful style that involves different breath control to melodic singing and results in strong vocal oscillations along with indefinite pitches, which roughly follow a set manner of rise and fall. In general, a sense of tonality is difficult to perceive in dynamic singing, though in some schools of chant it can be described as two central pitches a minor 3rd apart, with several auxiliary pitches above and below. Dynamic chant tends to be used by forceful characters or in dramatically dynamic or intense situations.

Stylized speech follows a typical model that spans an entire phrase of text. The underlying model begins low, gradually rises in pitch over several syllables, then drops again while approaching the end of the phrase. This rise and fall follows free microtonal increments; it is more marked for strong characters or characters expressing heightened emotion, and gentler for female or old male characters.

(iv) Instruments

The two hourglass hand drums (*tsuzumi*), the larger *ōtsuzumi* (also *ōkawa*) and the smaller *kotsuzumi* are the most prominent instrumental accompaniment. The bodies are made of wood, usually cherry, which is carefully lacquered. Each has two horsehide heads that are stretched over hoops and then lashed to each other. Before each performance the *ōtsuzumi* drumheads must be heated and dried before being lashed tightly against the drum body, thus creating its characteristic high, hard crack when struck. The *ōtsuzumi* player often has a newly-heated drum brought to him midway through a play in order to maintain the sound. The *kotsuzumi* drumheads, on the other hand, are more loosely

lashed against the drum body and require moisture to create their fuller, reverberating sound; this is maintained by sticking pieces of traditional paper on the back drumhead, which the player dabs with saliva and blows on throughout the performance.

When played, the *ōtsuzumi* is held on the left lap and struck horizontally with the right hand, while the *kotsuzumi* is held at the right shoulder and struck from below with the right hand. Their drumstrokes are combined with drum-calls (*kakegoe*) to form a variety of patterns that may accompany the chanted text or instrumental sections featuring a flute melody. The drum-calls serve as signals between the drummers and the singers (or the flute) to keep everyone together; they can also signal changes in tempo or dynamic. With a few rare exceptions, the hand drums perform together in all metred rhythmic ones and many unmetred segments (see §(v), below). The *ōtsuzumi* tends to be the leader of the two, since its drum-calls and its strokes are more forceful.

The *nōkan* (or *fue*) flute is the sole melodic instrument. Made of bamboo, it has a narrow pipe (*nodo*, literally 'throat') inserted between the blowhole and the first finger-hole. This upsets the normal acoustic properties of the flute pipe and is responsible for its 'other-worldly' sound quality. It is used in both metred and non-metred rhythmic styles in instrumental entrance music and instrumental dance segments. It is also played in free rhythm (*ashirai*) along with the chanted text to heighten or expand emotion. When played in unmetred segments, the flute plays set patterns improvisatorially. The melody of the flute has no specific pitch relationship with the melody of the singing, although there are some similarities in the general melodic contours of the two.

The *taiko* barrel drum (*see* Kumi-daiko) is the final and fourth instrument of the *nō* ensemble, struck from above with two thick cylindrical sticks. It is used in just over half of the plays in the traditional repertory, and then mainly in the latter half of the performance. Plays that use *taiko* tend to feature non-human characters such as gods, heavenly beings, demons and beasts. As with the two hand drums, the *taiko* player employs drum-calls which intermesh with the drum-calls of the hand drums. These also serve as signals among the drummers and to the singers or dancers.

(v) Rhythms

Nō clearly distinguishes between metred rhythmic chant or flute melody (*hyōshi-au*), and non-metred or 'free' rhythmic chant or flute melody (*hyōshi-awazu*). These rhythms are 'matched' in the sense that the rhythm of the chant or flute matches that of the drums, or 'non-matched', where there is no exact correspondence between them, whether or not the rhythm of the chant or flute is tied loosely to the drums.

There are three kinds of 'matched' rhythmic chant, all of which are based on an eight-beat system (*yatsu-byōshi*). The first, *ōnori* ('large rhythm'), is based on a system of one syllable of text per beat, where the beats are basically of equal time value (with a degree of acceleration or retardation as required by the drama). Variation of this eight syllables to eight beats is common and follows set rules. *Ōnori* is full and expansive and is often used at the end of a piece to establish a sense of closure. The use of *taiko* during this section is also quite common.

The second type of 'matched' rhythmic chant is *chūnori* ('medium rhythm'), which is based on two text syllables per beat, though again variation exists. Another name for this kind of rhythm is *shura-nori* ('warrior rhythm'), and it is most commonly used in passages describing battles. This kind of chanted rhythm is accompanied by the hand drums only.

The third and most unique type of ‘matched’ rhythm in *nō* is *hiranori* (‘standard rhythm’), also called *konori* (‘small rhythm’). It is the most frequently used ‘matched’ rhythm and also the most complex. The text in *hiranori* is based on poetic phrases of 7+5 syllables (*shichi-go chō*). These 12 syllables are distributed in a set manner over the eight beats of the musical phrase. This distribution takes two forms, depending on the patterns that the drums play. In the *mitsuji* (‘three ground’) form, the chanted syllables are sung without elongation as the hand drums play sparse patterns in tandem.

The second form of syllabic distribution in *hiranori* is the *tsuzuke* (‘continuous’) form, in which three of the chanted syllables are doubled in length and a rest added. The result is the equivalent of 16 syllables that are evenly divided over eight beats. The drums play interlocking patterns. The straight, even-pulsed quality of this rhythm makes it easier for the listener to count the eight beats. The use of one or the other of these two forms of *hiranori* depends on the patterns of the drums: if the drums play the sparse patterns of *mitsuji*, the chant will naturally be in *mitsuji* as well, and likewise for *tsuzuke*. Greater complexity occurs due to the many variations of the poetic metre: syllable lines of 7+4, 6+5, 4+6 etc. demand changes in the embellishment and/or elongation of syllables.

There are two types of ‘non-matched’ rhythm, which are defined by the drumming style that accompanies the chant. In *nori-byōshi* (‘riding rhythm’), the drum rhythms have a clear and relatively even pulse. In *sashi-nori* (‘inserted rhythm’) the rhythmic pulse of the drums is purposely made uneven or blurred. In both cases, the drums maintain a clear correspondence among themselves.

(vi) Kyōgen

This classical comedy theatre balances the more serious themes of *nō*. While *nō* is mainly music-based in nature, *kyōgen* is largely dialogue-based, though a number of songs and dances exist which tend to mimic the chant and dance style of *nō*. The two are traditionally performed alternately in the same programme, and they share a common heritage; in general, *kyōgen* is also inferred when speaking about the world of *nō*. In addition to their own *kyōgen* repertory of comic plays, *kyōgen* actors always appear in the interlude (*ai*) roles in *nō* plays, which are usually not comic in nature. Similarly, *nō* instrumentalists also sometimes appear in *kyōgen* plays, though their participation is not nearly as complex as it is for *nō*. The vocal and movement training methods of the two forms are very similar.

2. ‘Bunraku’.

W. Malm

A general term applied to all major forms of traditional Japanese puppet theatre, and the source of many of Japan’s most famous plays and most powerful narrative music.

(i) History

The term *bunraku* is derived from the stage name (Uemura Bunrakuken or Bunrakken) of Masai Kahei (1737–1810), who brought a puppet tradition from Awaji Island to Osaka. In 1811 his successor, Bunrakken II, set up a theatre at the Inari shrine in Osaka; in 1872 the same company built a theatre called the Bunraku in the city’s Dōtonbori entertainment district, where there had been other puppet theatres since 1684. In the 20th century *bunraku* became the general term for such theatres. Under

other names, puppetry in Japan can be traced back to the 12th century, its earliest forms possibly reflecting Asian continental influences and shamanism as well as indigenous religious functions. The major musical genre relating to *bunraku* is *jōruri*, which originated in the narration of the 15th-century *Jōruri jūnidan sōshi* ('Tale of Princess Jōoruri in 12 episodes'). As this story and other musical narrations developed, they came to be known generically as *jōruri*. When such stories were accompanied, the first instrument generally used was the pear-shaped lute, *biwa* (see §II, 3 above). In the 16th century this instrument was replaced by the three-string plucked lute, *shamisen* or *samisen* (see §II, 6 above). In the early 17th century narrator and *shamisen* accompaniments were combined with puppet plays, first in Kyoto and then in Edo (now Tokyo).

After the great fire of 1657 in Edo, the tradition moved to Osaka. There the most famous musical puppet drama tradition began in 1684 at the Takemoto theatre with *Yotsugi Soga* ('The Soga heir'), a historical play (*jidaimono*) by Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725) set to music by Takemoto Gidayū. A rival theatre was opened by Toyotake Wakadayū in 1703, the year in which Chikamatsu and Takemoto presented their first *sewamono* ('modern' play), *Sonezaki shinjū* ('The double suicide at Sonezaki'), which dealt with a young merchant and a courtesan instead of historical or magical figures. The music of Takemoto was called *gidayū-bushi* to differentiate it from the many other *jōruri* genres (see §II, 6(ii) above).

In puppet theatres of the early Edo period (1603–1868) the musicians were placed backstage or behind a bamboo curtain forward of stage-left. The puppets were operated by one man from below. In 1705 both the operator and the musicians were brought into view of the audience, and in 1734 the three-man puppets of today were brought into use, one man handling foot movements, another the left arm and the third controlling the head and right arm. Through the use of internal strings and manipulative skills, extremely subtle dramatic actions are possible with such puppets.

Subsequent decades reflect continual innovations by puppeteers, playwrights and musicians as well as cycles of decay and restoration. *Gidayū* music was a popular amateur tradition outside the puppet theatre, and concerts of female performers (*onna gidayū* or *musume gidayū*) flourished from the 19th to the mid-20th centuries. It later revived as part of the post-World War II feminist movement in Japan. Since the mid-20th century *bunraku* has been supported primarily by government subsidy and by devotees; the National Bunraku Theatre is located in Osaka. All major texts are in print, and many amateur and professional performances can be seen. Recordings of many famous performers also exist.

(ii) Performing practice

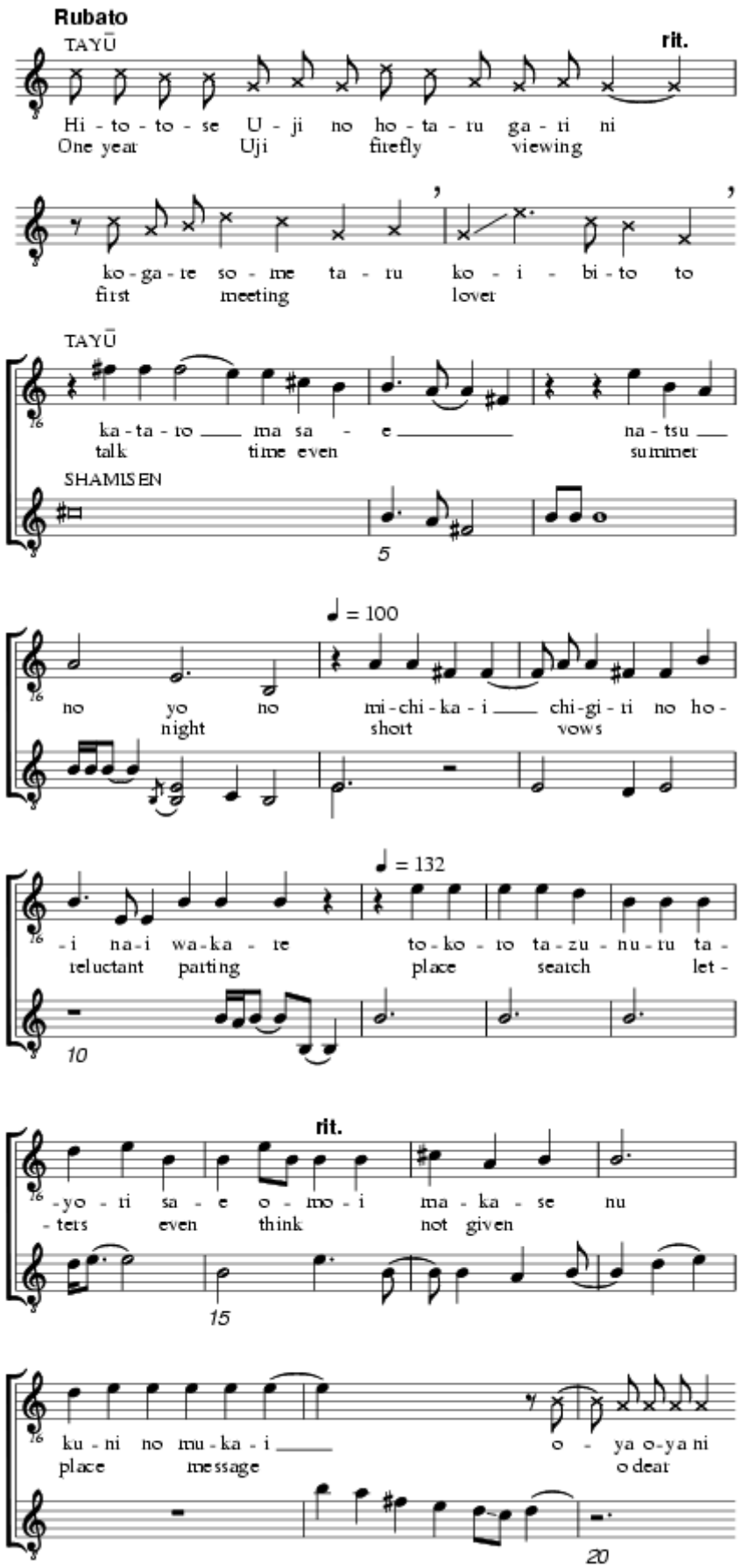
Gidayū music is performed in four ways: as accompaniment for *bunraku*, in *kabuki* theatre, in concerts or recitals, and as dance accompaniment. A normal performance is given by a singer (*tayū*) and one *shamisen* accompanist, although large groups may appear in dance sections. The singer kneels before a sturdy music stand (*mirudai* or *kendai*) on which the text is placed. Books of complete play texts are known as *shōhon*, *inbon* or, more commonly, *maruhon*. The latter term means 'round book' because of its florid 18th-century script. The music stand usually holds a *yukahon* ('use book') that contains only the text of the particular scene being performed. There also are *keikobon* ('lesson books') that are used for practice or for amateur lessons. Except in beginners' books, melodic notation is not found, although occasional rubrics appear alongside the text that are either singing symbols derived from *nō* drama or names of patterns, style or pitch levels (see below). The *shamisen* or, in Osaka dialect, *samisen* player is to the left of the singer. The *gidayūshamisen* is the largest of the traditional forms, with a thick neck

(*futōzao*), weighted bridges and a thick ivory plectrum. In theatrical performances the musicians are often placed off-stage-left on a revolving dais that turns to enable a new set of performers to replace the first two halfway through a scene: the performance is very tiring for the *tayū*, as he speaks all the roles of the play as well as singing all the music. Only men perform in the *bunraku* theatre.

(iii) Musical styles

The four basic styles of *gidayū* music are instrumental (*ai*), declamatory (*kotoba*), lyrical (*ji*, *jiai* or *fushi*) and parlando (*iro*, *ji iro* or *kakari*). These four styles interlock continually, as shown in ex.14 , a transcription of an excerpt from the inn scene (*Yadoya no dan*) of the play *Shōutsushi Asagao banashi* (‘The tale of Asagao the lookalike’). Instrumental sections vary from short units (e.g. bar 19) to longer solos, the latter often classed as *ai-no-te*, as in other *shamisen* and *koto* genres. Many instrumental passages have names and are used for specific musical or dramatic purposes. For example, there are *naki* patterns for various kinds of crying, and varieties of *iri* often precede high vocal cadenzas. The instrumental preludes and postludes to scenes can be equally informative. Theoretically, a type of *shamisen* music called *okuri*, played at the end of one scene in a play or, in a different form, at the start of another, indicates that the two scenes are set in the same place, while the use of *sanjū* patterns means that the second scene is in a new location. The nature of the character on stage or about to enter may also be conveyed by *shamisen* music.

Ex.14 Part of the inn scene from the play *Shōutsushi Asagao banashi* transcr. W. Malm



Translation:
One year, when I was firefly viewing on the Uji Rivet, I fell in love with a man.
Even time to talk was short on that summer night so we made vows and
parted reluctantly. I didn't even have time to get his address. Alas.

Ex.14 Part of the inn scene from the play Shōutsushi Asagao banashi; transcr. W. Malm

Table 4 is an abstraction of the general movement and levels of the three styles of vocal music. The general design for a major musical section (*sawari*) of a play is *A* – lyric or parlando units, *B* – a speech section returning to lyric and parlando passages, and *C* – a full cadence. Ex.14 illustrates an *A* section.

TABLE 4

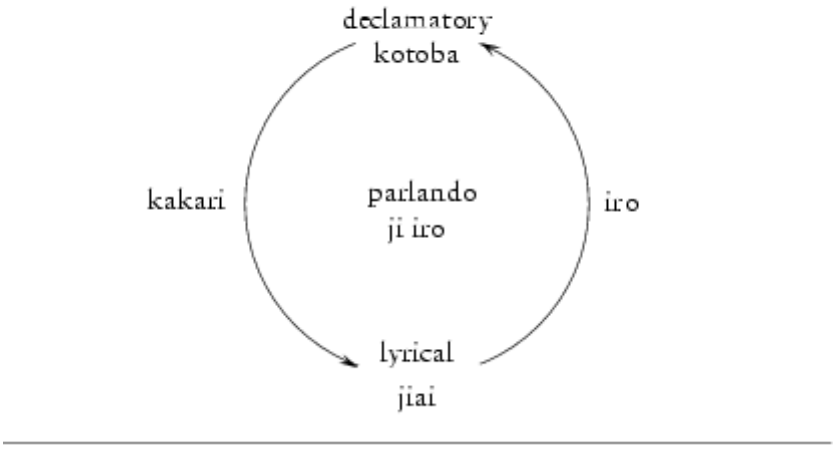


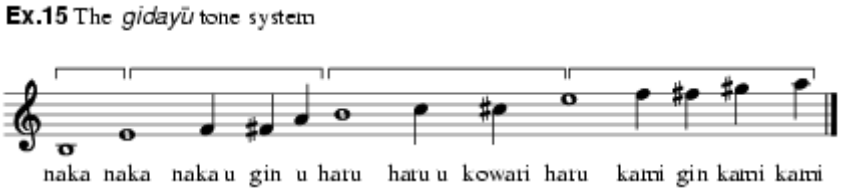
Table 4

Table 4

The opening three bars are the end of a monologue, spoken by the *tayū* in the voice style of a former court lady who, having cried herself blind over the loss of her lover, is now reduced to a life of performing music for inn guests. In this scene she is telling the story of her sad life to a guest who, unknown to her, is her former lover. The interpretative challenges in such declamatory passages are both dramatic and musical, for one essential point is the silent interval (*ma*) between phrases and the timing of the words. Thus the hardest moment is the rendition in bars 2 and 3 leading into the word *koibito* (‘lover’). The passage in bars 4–7 is marked in most textbooks as *kakari* (‘connection’), for it leads from declamation (*kotoba*) into lyricism (*jiai*) as seen on Table 4 and in ex.14. As noted, additional performance instructions can be found beside the text, though not specific melodic notations in the Western sense. For example, the next passage (bars 8–10) is sometimes marked *ji naka*, implying that the line is becoming lyrical at a lower pitch range. The term *haru* may be found at the start of the next passage (bar 11), which may imply not only a higher pitch level but also a more taut voice quality. The meaning of such terms is only learnt by lessons with a master. The final *shamisen* passage (bar 19) does not resolve to the pitch centre E, thus leading the music back to speech in a fluid *iro* manner and the beginning of section *B*. If it had cadenced fully it would have been called a *tome* (ending). From this short excerpt one can sense the combination of conventions and specific interpretations that make full *bunraku* performances or *sawari* recitals as dramatic as Western opera, though the idiom is quite different.

(iv) Tonal system

The *yō* and *in* scales (*see* Mode, §V, 5) predominate in *gidayū*, as in most *shamisen* music. The flow between tonalities is determined by changes of one pitch within a 4th (ex.15). Melodic tension is created by using pitches above or below tonal centres (see the uses of F♯, D, C♯, C and A in ex.14). The basic pitch of a given performance is determined by the singer. Using the B of ex.14 as an arbitrary tonal centre, the basic sonic vocabulary of *gidayū* and words attached to pitches in it are shown in ex. 15. Only *gin* and *kowari* are pitch specific. Terminology in *gidayū* is as fluid as its structure.



Ex.15 The gidayū tone system

Performers often refer to ‘Eastern-style’ (*higashi-fū*) passages that favour F and C and ‘Western-style’ (*nishi-fū*) ones that favour F♯ and C♯. The terms originally referred to the Toyotake and Takemoto theatre styles respectively, but today both may occur within a given piece. In actual practice, however, the intonation of these auxilliaries is quite flexible as compared with other *shamisen* genres, and portamenti may further obscure modal analysis while adding colour to the performance. Such pitch variability may reflect both a chanter’s (or his teacher’s) preference and sometimes the mood of the passage. Often a sadder passage will tend towards the *in* mode, with F and C replacing their sharped variants.

(v) Form

Period plays (*jidaimono*) traditionally have five sections (*dan*), and genre plays (*sewamono*) have three acts (*maki*). Three-part divisions of entire plays or sections are common. The terms, *jo*, *ha* and *kyū* (‘introduction’, ‘breaking away’, ‘hurried’) are frequently used for these (see §II, 4(iii)(b) above), although *jōruri* nomenclature has added *sei*, *san* and *kyū* (‘peaceful’, ‘mountainous’, ‘rushing’), and *kuchi*, *naka* and *kiri* (‘opening’, ‘middle’, ‘cut’). The first two sets of words are general aesthetic terms, whereas the third refers to subdivisions of a given scene. For example, the traditional divisions of a period play might be as shown in Table 5 : each *dan* may be subdivided into various combinations of the three types of term, as shown in the third *dan*. The third *dan* is chosen, as it is considered to be the climax of a play. The *kiri* is the climax of a scene or *sawari*. In the above outline the *kiri* (which may be an hour long) is further subdivided into a *kuchi* and a *kiri*, and that sub-*kiri* comes to a dramatic ending in a *kyū*. Under this system the most important moment in the play would thus be the *kyū* of the *kiri* of the *kiri* of the *ha* of the *ha* of the third *dan*! Such distinctions are seldom the concern of the musicians or the audience, although the term *kiri* is well known to them all. The term *dan* is applied generally to whatever portion is performed and so cannot be viewed in such an architectonic manner when used as a title. Moreover, although it is felt that the pitch centres of various *dan* and subsections should occur in a given order, complete plays are rarely performed, and thus such tonal and formal points are lost.

One now normally sees a potpourri of sections or subsections from different plays in one programme. Although the original theatrical design is gone, there remains a rich repertory of artistic dramatic excerpts performed in a unique solo narrative form.

TABLE 5

1st dan	2nd dan	3rd dan	4th dan	5th dan
JO	HA			KYŪ
	jo	ha	kyū	
	kuchi	naka	kiri	
			kuchi	kiri
			sei	san kyū

Table 5

Table 5

3. ‘Kabuki’.

W. Malm

Japanese theatrical form popular since the Edo period (1603–1868) and the source of many major musical genres.

(i) History

In the late 17th century the term *kabuki* was used to refer to something unconventional, such as clothing or social behaviour. The word was first connected with the theatre in a source of 1603 that mentions an unusual dance (*kabuki odori*) supposedly performed in 1596 by Okuni, a female dancer from the Izumo Shintō shrine. Using a *nō*-style stage set on the Kamo river-bed in Kyoto, she performed a lively version of a Buddhist festival dance, the *nenbutsu odori*, to the accompaniment of the drums and flute of the *nō* and a small Buddhist gong that she played herself. The popularity of the entertainment was enhanced by additional folkdances and pantomimes. Such performances subsequently spread through the country as female (*onna kabuki*) or prostitute (*yūjo kabuki*) ‘modern’ theatre. In 1629 the government banned them, although the rival genre, the *wakashū kabuki* (‘young-boy show’), continued. These forms of popular theatre had developed rapidly, the major musical change being the addition of the *shamisen* as the chief melodic instrument (see §II, 6 above).

The banning of the ‘young-boy’ *kabuki* in 1642 led to the use of the term ‘*yarō*’ (‘male-adult’) *kabuki* and to pantomime comedy (*momomane kyōgen zukushi*). However, audiences preferred the term *kabuki*, and as the drama matured, the Chinese ideographs representing music, dance and acting were chosen to write it.

Traditional *kabuki* has remained a genre performed entirely by males, the role of *onnagata* (female impersonator) being highly respected. It was cultivated and popularized by itinerant and local companies as well as in the permanent theatres of big cities such as Osaka, Kyoto and Edo (now Tokyo), and by the 19th century there was an established repertory of 18 great plays and a tradition of famous playwrights, 'hit' shows and star actors. Much of the tradition survived into the 20th century, continuing alongside regional variants and new styles (some of which include actresses and new music). Most major *kabuki* companies are owned by film corporations, but in 1965 a government-subsidized national theatre was established, which regularly shows *kabuki* (among other traditional genres) and includes a training school for *kabuki* performers.

There are two main kinds of *kabuki* play: *jidaimono*, or pseudo-historical period pieces, and *sewamono*, stories dealing with plebeian life of the Edo period. There are also modern plays. Traditional plays are seldom performed complete, as they may last for a day or more. Normally the Kabuki-za in Tokyo stages two programmes a day, each consisting of single acts from plays and often dances from other acts. Some scenes have no music at all, but only the content of the *kabuki* dramas with music is discussed here.

(ii) Performing practice

Kabuki music is played by onstage (*debayashi*) or offstage (*geza*) groups. Both use percussion and flutes and perform different genres of *shamisen* music, the most commonly used being *gidayū*, *nagauta*, *kiyomoto* and *tokiwazu* (see §II, 6(ii) above). Players of each genre belong to different guilds and maintain separate rooms backstage. In plays derived from the puppet theatre (*bunraku*), the *gidayū* singer and *shamisen* player, known collectively as the *chobo*, kneel on a dais stage-left or behind a bamboo-curtained alcove above the stage-left entrance. In pieces of pure dance using *nagauta* or in works derived from *nō* plays, the onstage ensemble traditionally consists of a row of singers and *shamisen* (up to eight of each) on a red dais at the back of the stage, with the drums and flute of the *nō* (known collectively as the *hayashi*) on the floor in front of them. Up to four *kotsuzumi* (hourglass drums held at the shoulder) and two *taiko* (drums played with a stick) may be used, although only one *ōtsuzumi* (side-held hourglass drum) and one flute are usual. The flautist uses both the *nō* flute (*fue* or *nōkan*) and a bamboo flute of folk origin (*takebue* or *shinobue*). If more than one type of *shamisen* music is used on stage, the arrangement of the musicians is determined by the layout of the set. In such mixed performances (*kakeai*) the genre of the performers can be identified not only by their style but also by the colour and shape of the singers' music stands.

The offstage or *geza* ensemble is normally positioned in a room at the stage-right corner, from which its members can see, through a bamboo curtain (*kuromisu*), the stage or the *hanamichi* (entrance ramp) that runs from the back of the auditorium to the stage. The *geza* ensemble may use the instruments and singers from the *nagauta* ensemble mentioned above, as well as many other percussion combinations. The *ōdaiko*, a large barrel drum with two tacked heads, and a temple bell (*kane*) are frequently used, as are instruments of folk or festival origin such as the hand gong (*atarigane*), the *okedō* and the festival *taiko* stick drums. Horse bells (*orugōru*), cymbals (*chappa*) and a xylophone (*mokkin*) may also add appropriate dramatic effect to traditional *kabuki*.

More modern variants of *kabuki* include the genre called Super Kabuki, created by the actor Ichikawa Ennosuke in 1986. This uses a fast-paced staging and adds to the traditional musical elements a wide range of other instruments (*koto*, *shakuhachi*, *biwa* and even some Western instruments) playing new compositions.

(iii) Functions of the music.

Offstage music, like film music, may give sound effects, set the mood, support stage actions or imply unspoken thoughts. Examples of sound effects are the use of Buddhist bells and perhaps a sung prayer to indicate that a scene is set near a big temple, or the use in a seashore scene of a pattern on the *ōdaiko* drum representing the sound of waves rolling in. Mood and location can be specified further by an offstage song, often sung before the curtain is pulled aside, which tells the audience that the scene is set in a geisha house, in a palace or on the Tōkaidō road between Kyoto and Edo. Certain *shamisen* interludes (*aikata*), when combined with the appropriate *ōdaiko* drumbeats, can imply such contexts as cold weather, rain or a dark summer night. A correctly beaten drum indicates approaching danger as 'naturally' as the tremolo diminished chord does in traditional Western drama. Dialogues and soliloquies may be underpinned by *meriyasu* (*shamisen* patterns), which are chosen for their correspondence to the text or the character. Unspoken thoughts can be expressed by *meriyasu* songs sung offstage while the actor broods, writes a farewell letter, or otherwise moves without speaking. More active stage events, such as fights (*tachimawari*) and formalized slow-motion fight dances, have specific instrumental accompaniment (*dontappo*).

There are over 150 *geza* songs and an equal number of *shamisen* interludes and percussion patterns. The musicians know which devices to use for each situation, and the names of such devices are found in performance books (*tsukechō*) provided for each production by the chief *geza* musician. The audience, like its Western counterpart, normally cannot name or describe the structure of a given signal but through familiarity with the genre can feel the sense of such musical events in relation to the drama.

Onstage music is generally direct narrative commentary or dance accompaniment. The narrative style (*katarimono*) is related to that of *bunraku* (see §II, 4(iii)(b) above), except that dialogue is spoken by the actors, not the narrator. The dance accompaniment is adapted to the choreographic needs of the performer and often requires special offstage effects to enhance the mood.

(iv) Form.

Kabuki plays and dances, like Western operas and ballets, have an endless variety of structures dependent on plots and actions. The most typical form of dance generally maintains the tradition of a tripartite division (*jo*, *ha* and *kyū*; see §III above), although with different nomenclature.

The *deha* ('coming out') contains an introduction (*oki*) and a travelling (*michiyuki*) section. The nature of the character, the setting and the means of entrance (trap-door, ramp, stage entrance) influence the musical style of both these sections. The *chūha* (middle section) often has a highly lyrical, romantic passage called the *kudoki* and occasionally some story-telling (*monogatari*). The major dance section (*odori ji*) is essential. The exit section (*iriha*) involves greater musical and choreographic action (*chirashi*) and a standard finale (*dangire*). Such a dance piece may be 15 to 40 minutes long, and there are great variations in the forms of specific pieces.

(v) Musical structure

The instrumentation of a *kabuki* dance piece varies according to the needs of the form and the dance. The singer and the *shamisen* perform the melodies; the use of the drums and flutes is more complex. Lyrical sections are often supported by the bamboo flute. The *nō* flute is used to play patterns totally unrelated to the *shamisen* melody: it sets the mood or, with the *taiko* stick drum, performs parts of patterns derived from *nō*. The *taiko* itself is used to play either named, stereotyped patterns originating in the *nō* tradition or units created for *kabuki*. The latter tend to reinforce the rhythm of the *shamisen* music, while the former sound 'out of synchronization' with it, although they match the melody of the *nō* flute if it is also being played. Such deliberate disjunction helps to create the necessary sense of forward motion and progression. The two *tsuzumi* drums are similarly used; often they directly support the *shamisen* rhythm in a style called *chirikara*, named after the mnemonics by which the music is learnt. When the drummers play patterns derived from *nō*, they, too, sound out of step with the main melody. Sometimes, therefore, the *tsuzumi* and *shamisen* are in one rhythmic conjunction, while the *taiko* and *nō* flute are tonally, melodically and rhythmically in a different cycle. This can be called a 'sliding door' effect, for the units each have a fixed internal structure but do not necessarily begin and end together. The effect is analogous to that of the harmonic settings of Western traditional music, although the sound is very different. As in Western harmonic progressions, the tensions are released at main cadence points.

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VII. Folk music

Fumio Koizumi, revised by David W. Hughes

Until a new phrase, '*minzoku ongaku*', translated from English and German, came into use in the mid-20th century, there had been no exact word in Japanese for 'folk music'. There are two meanings of *minzoku ongaku*, each written differently in Chinese characters but pronounced alike: music of various nations and folk music of a particular nation. The connotations of these two words correspond exactly to the German terms for studies of human traditions, 'Völkerkunde' and 'Volkskunde'. *Minzoku ongaku* in the latter sense is now fairly well understood to denote the kind of music that is played in villages and towns by non-professional musicians.

Japanese folk music can be seen as having three major divisions: *warabe-uta* (traditional children's game songs); *min'yō* (folksongs); and music for *minzoku geinō* (folk performing arts).

1. History.

A custom of the common people in the early 8th century CE was the singing of *utagaki*, or *kagai*, courting songs between men and women sung during spring and autumn festivals. This was documented by the writers of the *Fudoki* (compiled in 713), the official documents containing cultural and topographical descriptions of the various regions of Japan. Similar folk traditions, usually combined with agricultural rites, were observed until the mid-20th century by villagers in various places in Japan.

The two oldest chronicles, *Kojiki* ('Record of ancient matters', 712) and *Nihon shoki* ('Chronicles of Japan', 720), contain the texts of early folksongs called *hinaburi* ('rural manner'), *sakahogai no uta* ('songs of the drinking rite') and *wazauta* (divination songs and songs of political events). Twenty-one songs from the two chronicles are also found in the *Fudoki*, where seven more songs are recorded. Although the texts have various metrical forms, the form with 5+7+5+7+7 syllables is most common among these songs: when the first comprehensive anthology of songs, the *Man'yōshū* (20 volumes), was edited in the latter half of the 8th century, this metrical form was found to be almost exclusively the basis for about 4500 songs dating from the 4th century to the mid-8th century. Among these were many songs of everyday tasks such as cloth-bleaching, rice-pounding, corn-grinding and sake-brewing. The song texts with 5+7+5+7+7 syllables are usually considered the most typical of Japanese poems and hence are called *waka* ('Japanese song'). These were actually sung in early days, but by the Heian period (794–1185), they had become purely written poems occasionally chanted or recited in a stylized manner. These still survive and are performed every year at the imperial New Year poetry party.

The musicians of the imperial palace also preserve and often perform the *kagura* and *saibara* repertories, which are related to folksongs of the Heian period. The former includes the ceremonial rites, specifically called *mi-kagura* (see §V, 1 above), performed by court musicians for the Shintō

deities. Although it has been highly stylized, with *gagaku* influence, and respectfully arranged as an imperial rite, *kagura* reveals many elements of folksong style, such as leader-chorus (responsorial) singing and the alternate singing of two groups.*Saibara* has an even more direct relationship with the folksongs of the period. There are several theories concerning its origin, including that of Kawaguchi Ekai (1866–1945), who insisted that *saibara* originated in the Tibetan love-song called *saibar*. It is, however, generally believed that *saibara* consisted of a group of folksongs from central and western Japan that were chosen by the aristocracy for singing and arranged for performance to the accompaniment of *gagaku* instruments. This tradition had been almost forgotten by the middle of the Kamakura period (1192–1333) but was partly reconstructed (in greatly modified form) in the 17th century and more so in the 19th and 20th centuries. Within the aristocracy there was yet another group of folksongs, called *fuzoku*, from eastern Japan; these remained in complete obscurity after the Middle Ages. However, an imperial court musician, Yamanoi Motokiyo, has deciphered notation from an old scroll dated 1186 containing 14 *fuzoku*, which reveal the interesting fact that most of the songs are based on the scale structure that underlies modern folksongs, the *min'yō onkai* (see §3 below).

During the Middle Ages, that is the Kamakura and Muromachi(1338–1573) periods, many kinds of folk performing arts came into vogue. Some, such as *dengaku*, *sarugaku* and *kusemai*, were later performed by the specialized professionals who were the first in Japanese history to create a new artistic form, the *nō* theatre (see §VI, 1 above). Many others, such as *bon-odori* (folkdances for the late summer ancestral festival) and *hayashida* (rice-transplanting ritual performance), have remained folk performing arts even in the 20th century. In addition, many folksongs were recorded in a few anthologies of *kouta*, short songs of the time. Some can still be found among the texts of 20th-century folksongs.

Most modern folksongs date back to the Edo period (1603–1868), however. Although the townspeople were more consciously creative than the villagers in their musical art forms, the rural populace was also very productive during that period. In the early 17th century a genre of Japanese theatre, *kabuki*, was created by Okuni, a shrine maiden, who later organized a group of entertainers and dancers, both men and women, to perform *furyū* dances on stage. Like the *nō* theatre, *kabuki* was in its early days deeply rooted in folk tradition (see §VI, 3 above).

The *shamisen* and a short version of the *shakuhachi* (flute) known as the *hitoyogiri* came into vogue among the people in the latter half of the 17th century. In 1664 Nakamura Sōzan, a blind musician, wrote a book entitled *Shichiku shoshin-shū* ('Collection for beginners on silk and bamboo'); its three volumes were intended for beginners on the *hitoyogiri*, *koto* and *shamisen*, one volume for each. He used the popular songs and folksongs of his time as studies for the instruments; among them are many *bon-odori* songs, some of which still survive.

There have also been several anthologies of folksongs; the most informative on work songs of eastern and central Japan, including Hokkaidō, is *Hina no hitofushi*, edited in 1809 by Sugae Masumi (1754–1829). Towards the end of the Edo period and during the Meiji era (1868–1912) many popular songs appeared, depicting the life of the people in that changing society as well as the succession of social events. Most of these were soon forgotten despite their popularity; some, however, remained for longer and became folksongs, most of which are now sung as *ozashiki-uta* (songs for geisha and other parties).

As urbanization affected the whole country, some folksongs and traditional performing arts became more popular in a wider region through the mass media; many are now performed by amateurs and professionals, while others are gradually being forgotten by the people, who no longer work and live as before. But in the 1960s and 1970s an increasing number of folksong enthusiasts among young people and artists began to use traditional folk materials for their music.

Japanese folk music had never been studied scientifically before Machida Kashō (1888–1981) began his private gramophone archive of Japanese folksongs in 1934; this was later transferred to NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation), where Machida continued his work editing the voluminous anthology *Nihon min'yō taikan*. His study was followed by those of many musicologists, including Takeda Chūichirō, who edited *Tōhoku min'yō-shū*, Hattori Ryūtarō, Koizumi Fumio and Takeuchi Tsutomu.

2. 'Warabe-uta'

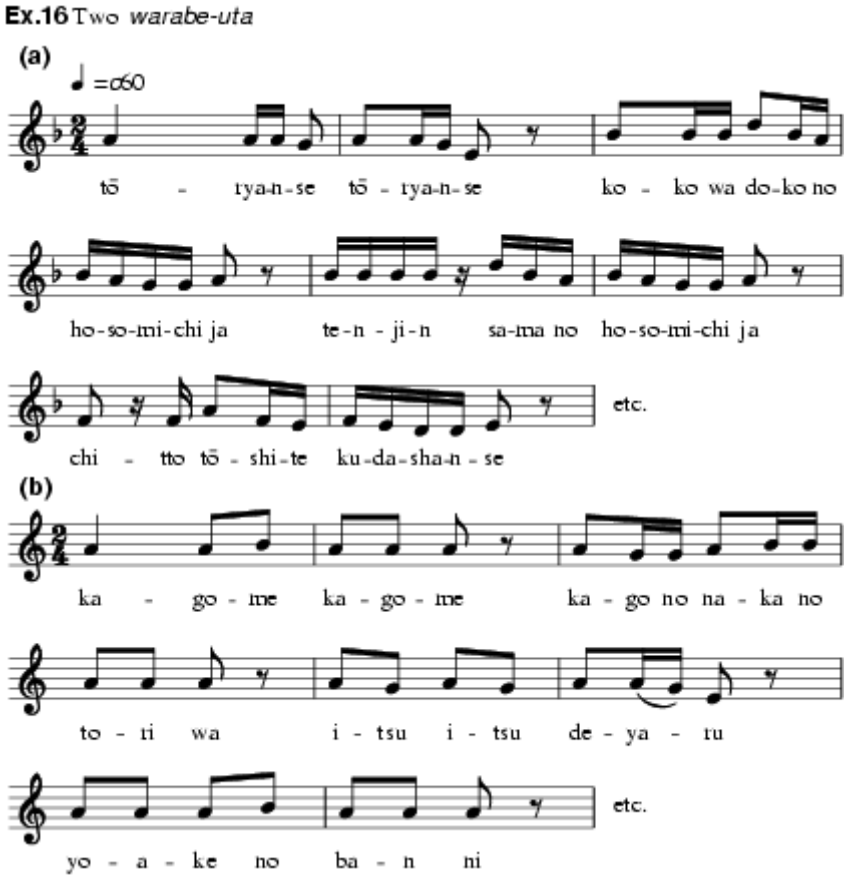
There are three kinds of Japanese song for children: (*shōgaku-*)*shōka* (songs for primary school use); *dōyō* (songs for children composed by professional musicians); and *warabe-uta* (traditional game songs). The last type is different from the other two mainly in that its form is simpler and it is always combined with some kind of game. Significantly, *warabe-uta* predominantly use traditional pentatonic scales and modes: they are 'traditional' products and are generally passed from child to child.

By contrast, *shōka* and *dōyō* are products of adult composers and lyricists, dating from the 1870s, after the introduction of Western music. Although tending to be taught in schools, often with the aid of printed notation and lyrics, many have entered the oral tradition; still, it is difficult to deem them 'folksongs'. More so than *warabe-uta*, they are sung also by adults, who find them nostalgic. They are based on Western major and minor modes, on the hybridized 'pentatonic major and minor' modes (see §I, 4 above), and only very rarely on traditional modes. They also sometimes employ 3/4 metre, which is never found in traditional music or in *warabe-uta*. Given such Western elements, it is not surprising that *shōka* and *dōyō* are often performed in harmonized settings.

Many *warabe-uta* are still sung by children, regardless of where they live throughout the country. These can be classified into ten groups according to the kind of game for which they are sung: *tonae-uta*, play songs without gestures, including *kazoe-uta* (counting songs), *warukuchi-uta* (abusing or teasing songs) and *kae-uta* (parody songs); *ekaki-uta* (picture-drawing songs), which are common among Japanese and Korean children; *ohajiki-* and *ishikeri-uta* (play songs using marbles and rocks); *otedama-uta* (play songs with bean bags); *maritsuki-uta* (ball-bouncing songs); *nawatobi-uta* (skipping-rope songs); *janken-uta* (rock-scissors-paper game songs); *oteawase-uta* (hand-clapping songs); *karadaasobi-uta* (a newly coined word for game songs with body movements, such as finger games, face games and foot games); and *oniasobi-uta* (play songs for large groups to decide who will be 'it').

Warabe-uta melodies, simple in structure, are usually within the range of a 6th or an octave, and in many cases they are based on one or two tetrachords. Following the tetrachordal model of Koizumi (see §I, 4 above), *yō* or *min'yō* tetrachords or scales are the most frequent in traditional *warabe-uta*, as in traditional folksong; the *in* or *miyako-bushi* tetrachord or scale is also common. A few *warabe-uta* mix more than one type. A good example is the well-known *Tōryanse* (ex.16a), which begins with a *yō* tetrachord then moves to two conjunct *in* tetrachords, both of which adds a lower-neighbour tone that strictly speaking belongs to a *yō* tetrachord. This is a relatively complex melody for traditional children's songs; a simpler one is shown in ex.16*b*.

Text setting of *warabe-uta* is almost wholly syllabic. The metrical forms, however, depend largely on the form of the particular game. Skipping-rope songs usually have a slow duple metre, whereas ball-bouncing songs show more variety in rhythm, depending on how the players bounce the balls.



Ex.16 Two warabe-uta: (a) ‘Tōryanse’; (b) ‘Kagome kagome’

3. ‘Min’yō’.

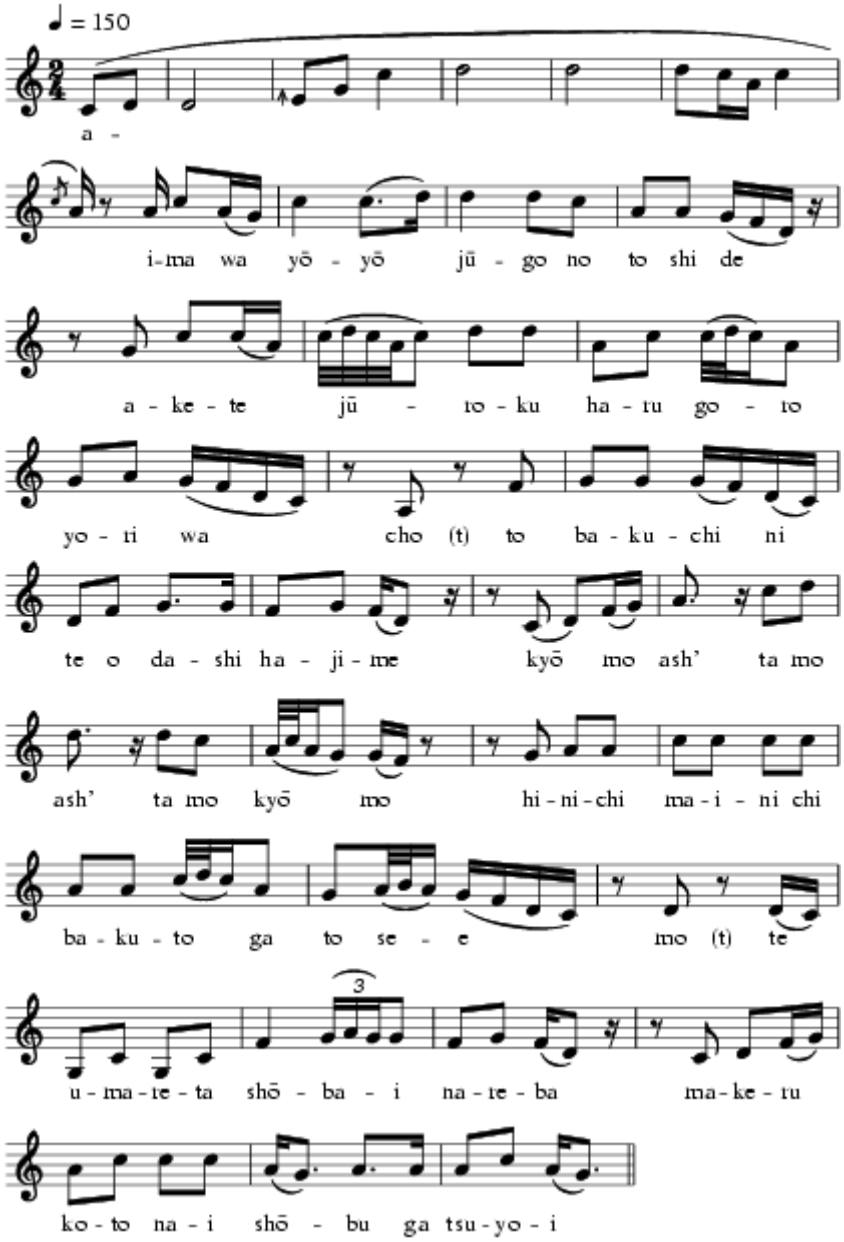
A relatively unified conceptual category of ‘folksong’ has only come into existence in Japan since the 1890s, with the gradual spread and acceptance of the term *min’yō*. This was a direct translation of the German word *Volkslied*, and the concept, like the term itself, owed much to European influence as Japan rapidly Westernized. This term gradually replaced other words such as *kuniburi*, *hinauta* and *riyō*, all meaning ‘rural song’. The ‘folk’ themselves tended until recently to call their own songs merely *uta*, the general term for all song, but adding appropriate modifiers when necessary (e.g.*taue-uta*, ‘rice-transplanting song’).

The content of the category of *min’yō* is not fixed, with debate and disagreement among scholars as well as among listeners and practitioners. It includes, of course, all kinds of songs that are traditionally inherited mainly through oral transmission by non-professional singers; many of these were unaccompanied work songs. Additionally, it embraces arrangements and performances of such songs by professional ‘folk singers’ (*min’yō kashu*) accompanied on traditional instruments; these are now often called ‘stage folksongs’ (*sutēji min’yō*). Finally, the category may include so-called ‘new folksongs’ (*shin-min’yō*) composed during the 20th century by known composers, generally

professionals, and often commissioned by rural communities or companies to serve as publicity songs; these are rarely sung but instead are broadcast over loudspeakers at train stations, community dances etc.

Unlike their counterparts in the West, virtually every *min'yō* has a 'hometown' (*furusato*, lit. 'old village'), hence the saying *min'yō wa kokoro no furusato* 'folksong is the heart's hometown'. The title's first word is itself probably the name of a town or pre-modern province, usually followed by a word such as *uta*, *bushi*, *ondo* or *jinku*, all basically meaning 'song'; thus *Yagi bushi*, 'Song from [the town of] Yagi' (ex.17), or *Tsugaru aiya bushi*, 'Song [extensively using the vocable] *aiya* from [the pre-modern province of] Tsugaru'. Commercial recordings generally list the prefecture of origin immediately after the title.

Ex.17 *Yagi bushi*



Ex.17 One verse of 'Yagi bushi' (accompaniment not shown) as sung by Horigome Genta II, 1930; original a minor 3rd lower; transcr. David Hughes

A song's title had no need to mention the place of origin until the song had migrated. An early example is *Ise ondo*, an entertainment song from the great Shintō shrine town of Ise, which now exists in variants throughout Japan, having been brought back by pilgrims. Most songs, however, only acquired place names after the late 19th century, as rapid urbanization and improved transport carried songs with their singers far from home. Sometimes a migrating song keeps its original place name alongside its new one: *Esashi Oiwake* is Esashi town's version of a song that was carried by travellers from the distant post-town of Oiwake. Given the link to rural homes, it is not surprising that folksongs are often mentioned in the popular songs of the genre *enka*, many of which express urban migrants' nostalgia for home.

Scholars have classified traditional *min'yō* variously, but often into *shigoto-uta* (work songs), *sakamori-uta* (drinking-party songs) *bon-odori-uta* (dance songs for the *(o)-bon* ancestral festival), and *ozashiki-uta* (songs for geisha parties or similar occasions); some would include a category for songs sung as part of various *minzoku geinō* (see §4 below). The largest and most varied category by far is work songs. When Yanagita Kunio first classified Japanese folksongs in 1936, he listed six subtypes of work song: *ta-uta* (paddy-field songs), *niwa-uta* ('garden songs', for work at home, indoors and outdoors), *yama-uta* ('mountain songs', including lumberjack songs etc.), *umi-uta* (sea songs), *waza-uta* ('skilled craft' songs pertaining to various professions) and *michi-uta* ('road songs', for transport etc.). But many finer classifications have been offered. In some cases there are specific songs for various stages of a task such as *sake*-making. Some 'work songs' help to coordinate the rhythm of a work group and thus need to have a clear metre; others may be solo songs for distraction during or between work tasks, and these may be in free rhythm. Modernization has eliminated the contexts for most work songs, though dance and party songs have survived better in their original homes, since parties and the ancestral festival are still important.

The musical features of *min'yō* are diverse but may be summarized as follows. The overwhelming majority of songs are pentatonic, most often in the *yō* mode (hence its alternative name, the *min'yōonkai*, 'folksong scale') but frequently also in the *in* (*miyako-bushi*) or *ritsu* modes. 'New folksongs' of the 1970s and later, however, tend to use the 'pentatonic major' or in rare cases the 'pentatonic minor' (see §I, 4 above) as these are easier to harmonize in Western style. A loud, sharp voice is preferred except in intimate situations; a high tessitura is also generally favoured, especially among professionals. The relationship between the voice and any melodic accompaniment is heterophonic, although some older songs feature short repeated motifs on flutes or *shamisen*.

Songs can be metred or non-metred (in 'free rhythm'). Metre is virtually always duple, either simple (2/4) or compound (6/8), with a bar of 6/8 mostly realized as the sequence crotchet–quaver–crotchet–quaver. Skill at various types of vocal ornamentation (*kobushi*, 'little melodies') is one mark of a good singer and flourishes especially in free-rhythm songs such as *Esashi Oiwake*. Ex.18a shows the first few seconds of a notation devised for this song in the mid-20th century (no other folksong has ever had such a notation), with ornaments expressed by various special symbols. Sonograms of two singers (ex. 18*b*, first two partials) are eerily similar to the notation. The linked braces show correspondences between the notation and the sonograms. Ex.18*c* is a Western transcription, spaced to match the sonograms.

Many songs of all types are now sung by professionals in 'stage' arrangements, accompanied by a standard ensemble: namely *shakuhachi* alone for free-rhythm songs; *shamisen* (depending on the nature of the song), *taiko* (usually a laced *shime-daiko* and a flattish tacked-head *hira-daiko*), *kane*

hand-gong and either *shakuhachi* or *shinobue* transverse flute for metered songs (*shamisen* and *shakuhachi* were uncommon in most traditional villages). Unlike village song, all professional folksong features a solo vocalist, often backed by two or three singers to provide a refrain (*hayashi*). Even these 'stage' versions retain their ability to trigger nostalgia, and links with traditional village life are often recalled.

As a counterbalance to the professionalization and urbanization of *min'yō*, many regional songs are now transmitted in their traditional mode by local 'preservation societies' (*hozonkai*). For work songs, members may even reproduce the movements of the original task of, say, fishnet hauling or barley threshing as they sing.

As recently as the 1970s, nearly half of the Japanese population identified themselves as fans of *min'yō*, far exceeding any other genre aside from 'pop' music. The figure was much lower at the end of the 20th century; however, there are still frequent concerts by professionals, recitals by their students, occasional televised *min'yō* shows (especially from local stations) etc. 'Folksong bars' (*min'yō sakaba*) in various major cities allow customers to sing accompanied by the house band. In August, ancestral festival dances in every town and village feature *min'yō*, although these are often recordings of 'new folksongs' with Western instrumental accompaniment rather than live traditional tunes. There are also numerous *min'yō* contests, some national, some focussed on a single song from a single community; the latter strengthen the long-standing links between local song and tourism. The largest of several umbrella *min'yō* organisations, the Japan Folk Song Association (Nihon Min'yō Kyōkai), has had as many as 50,000 members, most of whom teach or study via formal lessons on the model of the *iemoto* system of the classical arts (see §I, 3 above).

The most popular genre of *min'yō* among the general populace, particularly the young, is surely *tsugaru-jamisen*, a solo tradition of dynamic, partly improvised *shamisen* music, which has separated from Tsugaru-region folksong accompaniment. It provided a livelihood for blind itinerants in the early part of the 20th century. The traditional-style folk singer Itō Takio has also attracted a wider audience (if reducing his former one) through performing *min'yō* accompanied by jazz ensemble, synthesizer or various other mixes of non-traditional instruments, or by enhanced traditional ensembles, while keeping his standard *min'yō* vocal style and at the same time adding striking dynamic and tempo changes.

Min'yō, oddly, has rarely interacted with the world of Western-style 'folksong' accompanied by guitars and other instruments. But it is having some small impact on non-mainstream pop musicians such as Hosono Haruomi and Soul Flower Union. Such artists, however, currently tend to prefer Okinawan to other styles of Japanese folksong.

4. 'Minzoku geinō'.

Most *minzoku geinō*, also called *kyōdo geinō*, are performed by local villagers at the festivals of Shintō shrines and Buddhist temples. The most commonly used scholarly classification of *minzoku geinō* is that of Honda Yasuji (see Thornbury, 1997; Hoff, 1978). While far from watertight, it does capture most folk performing arts within four major categories, of which the last is a catch-all: *kagura* (more specifically *sato-kagura*, as distinct from the *mi-kagura* of the imperial palace), which is performed by Shintō priests as well as villagers and townsfolk with a variety of entertainments, including a dance-drama based on Shintō mythology for the consolation of ancestors' spirits and the long life of the

people; *dengaku*, performed by farmers wishing for a good harvest and associated with a variety of dances and mimes; *furyū*, group dances with various origins, including exorcist and Buddhist invocations; and miscellaneous theatrical forms, dance-dramas and pageants that originated in the arts of the upper class of earlier society, such as *gagaku*, *bugaku* and *sangaku*, but which are now arranged into local styles and performed by local people.

The music of these folk performances may be either instrumental or vocal and accompanied by various folk instruments. The most commonly used idiophones are:*dōbyōshi* (a pair of cymbals), *kane* (gong), *sōban* (a pair of gongs), *suri-zasara* (scraper), *bin-zasara* (set of concussion plaques strung together) and *yotsudake* (bamboo castanets). Membranophones include the *okedō* (cylindrical drum), two sizes of *tsuzumi* (hourglass drum), *shimedaiko* (barrel drum with two laced heads), *ōdaiko* (nailed barrel drum) and *uchiwa-daiko* (frame drum). String instruments used are the *shamisen* and *kokyū* (fiddle), while aerophones include the *shinobue* (transverse flute), *nōkan* (transverse flute used in *nō* theatre and some folk ritual music), *shakuhachi* (end-blown flute) and *horagai* (conch-shell trumpet). The *shinobue* is by far the most common melodic instrument, indeed the only one in most *minzoku geinō*, partly due to its ease of manufacture. Many of these instruments have several names.

Melodies of most *minzoku geinō* use the *ritsu* or *yō* modes, with the *in* being rarer except near urban centres (hence the *in* mode's alternative name: *miyako-bushi*, 'urban tune'). However, the tunings of locally made *shinobue* are highly diverse in pitch and intervallic pattern.

Minzoku geinō, like *min'yō*, have often moved from traditional contexts to the concert stage, hotel lobbies and so forth. Various folkloric festivals are now held throughout Japan, featuring groups from several regions. Preservationism is encouraged by national and local government systems of designating certain traditions as Important Intangible Folk Cultural Properties or the like; outside the original context, however, significant innovation may occur. A major new phenomenon is the popularity of large ensembles centred on stick-drums, creating since the 1960s a new tradition called Kumi-daiko or *wadaiko*. Communities throughout Japan are forming such ensembles, competing for members with traditional *minzoku geinō*. The international popularity of groups such as Kodō risks misleading non-Japanese as to the nature of village performing arts.

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VIII. Regional traditions

1. Ryūkyū

Robin Thompson

The Ryukyu archipelago stretches in an arc between Kyū.shū. and Taiwan at the south-western tip of Japan. 'Ryū.kyū.' denotes the area within this archipelago occupied by the kingdom of Ryū.kyū. at the time of its invasion by the Satsuma fief of southern Kyū.shū. in 1609. It consists of four island groups in the southern part of the archipelago: Amami, Okinawa, Miyako and Yaeyama (from north to south). These share important cultural and linguistic traits of sufficient distinctiveness to merit consideration of Ryū.kyū. either as a cultural entity in its own right or as one of the two principal cultural spheres of Japan. The Ryukyuan sphere covers the area of modern Okinawa Prefecture and the Amami islands at the far south of Kagoshima Prefecture. The music of each island group possesses its own distinctive character: the earliest strata of music are found in the Miyako islands; the Okinawa islands (in particular the main island, where the capital of the kingdom was located) saw the development of a sophisticated tradition of art music; the music of the Yaeyama islands includes developed folk and art traditions; and the music of Amami evolved, for historical reasons, largely apart from the mainstream of developments in other parts of Ryū.kyū.

Music can be divided into two main categories: folk music, which plays an important part in festivals and religious ceremonies on all the islands, and art music, which developed among the nobility at the royal court in the capital, Shuri. These two categories have, however, maintained a symbiotic relationship over the centuries. During the pre-modern period, the indigenous tradition of art music was supplemented at the Shuri court by the practice of certain Chinese and Japanese art music genres, which exerted an influence on the development of the Ryukyuan art music tradition. The practice of these additional genres came to an end with the dissolution of the kingdom and the establishment of Okinawa Prefecture in 1879. The indigenous tradition then flourished. This was a consequence of practitioners of art music and the court performance arts among the disbanded nobility being obliged through economic necessity to transmit their accomplishments to the former class of commoners, or a result of their having moved to the provinces, where these arts soon took hold.

As in other parts of Japan, Western music is prevalent in modern Okinawa, although it has not dislodged indigenous mediums from their position as the focus of musical expression. The category of modern folk music, comprising songs performed in local dialects of Japanese and employing indigenous musical elements, continues to be the main vehicle for musical creativity, while the art music tradition currently has more practitioners than ever before. Genres such as Western rock music are popular among young people, although when practised by Okinawans they often incorporate elements from the indigenous tradition. Okinawan popular music in such syncretic styles has become popular both inside and outside Japan.

(i) Folk music

A generic feature of Japanese music is the predominance of the voice; nowhere is this feature more evident than in Okinawa. Folk music is exclusively vocal and closely connected with ancient traditions of oral literature. Since literary traditions are primarily oral and expressed through the medium of music, a classification of the genres of folk music is similar to that of folk literature.

(a) Sacred songs (kamiuta)

Although Buddhism was introduced into Ryūkyū following the establishment of the kingdom in 1392, it never displaced native shamanistic and animistic religious traditions. As in Japan before the introduction of Buddhism, religious ceremonies have been the preserve of a female sacerdotal hierarchy. Priestesses known as *noro* or *tsukasa* sing poetical texts intended to invoke the beneficence of the gods, especially in connection with provision of a plentiful harvest, or to serve as the vehicles for divine oracles.

The songs may be similar to heightened speech or may have a simple strophic melodic structure extending over a narrow pitch range. They are generally unaccompanied, although a simple rhythmic accompaniment is sometimes provided by a drum (*chijin*). The ceremonies at which the texts are sung take place in simple outdoor shrines known in Okinawa as *utaki* and in Yaeyama as *on*. The principle genres are *omori* in Amami; *miseseru*, *otakabe*, *umui* and *kwēna* in Okinawa; *pyāshi*, *tābi*, *fusa* and *nīri* in Miyako; and *kanfutsu* and *ayō* in Yaeyama. Other songs of similar type are performed to cure disease, to call for rain and to pray for safe sea voyages.

(b) Work-songs

Many songs with titles indicating links with communal physical labour are extant, although few are still performed in their original contexts. Among the tasks accompanied by such songs were rice-hulling, millet-grinding, earth-pounding and rowing. The largest number come from Yaeyama, where they belong to the genres known as *yunta* and *jiraba*.

(c) Music of festivals and the popular performing arts.

The two major events in the Ryukyuan calendar are the Bon Festival of the Dead, in the seventh month of the lunar calendar, and the harvest festival (*hōnen-sai*), which occurs during the week before the night of the harvest moon (15th day of the eighth month).

A feature of the Bon festival in Okinawa is the performance style known as *eisā*, which is traditionally presented on the night of the 15th day of the seventh month, after the spirits of departed ancestors have returned to their places of rest. Following a round dance at the village shrine, a group of young people visits each house in the village singing and dancing, often to the accompaniment of *sanshin* and drums, in a style based on the *esa omoro* genre of indigenous group dance and incorporating elements from the *nenbutsu odori* style of Japanese popular Buddhist dance.

Harvest festival entertainments consist largely of musical, dance and theatrical items incorporated from the classical art repertory. Other festivities in which folk music plays an intrinsic part include the *unjami* festival of the sea gods, the *shinugu* post-harvest celebration and the women's round dance *ushidēku*. These forms flourish especially in the northern part of Okinawa Island, although regional variants exist throughout Ryūkyū.

(d) Recreational songs

The custom of singing for recreation in Japanese music can be traced back to *utagaki* courting songs. Although such songs have long disappeared from elsewhere in Japan, they survive in certain parts of Ryūkyū, especially in the *hachigatsu odori* genre of Amami. As performed today, the style features an exchange of sung verses between separate groups of men and women. A performance may continue for several hours, with the content of the songs often becoming increasingly ribald as the performance progresses.

The category of recreational songs comprises a large proportion of the repertory of folksong accompanied by the *sanshin*. Among the most popular examples are those in which a skeletal melody is used as the vehicle for a wide variety of lyrical or narrative poetic texts. Such songs include *Nākuni* and *Kuduchi* in Okinawa, *Tōgani* and *Ayagu* in Miyako, and *Tubarāma* in Yaeyama. A distinctive and complex style of *sanshin*-accompanied singing has evolved in Amami, employing Okinawan texts but largely independent of Okinawan musical influence. Performed by musicians known as *utasha*, the style is characterized by use of an intricate *sanshin* technique and a male falsetto voice unique in Japanese music.

(e) New folksongs

The category of new folksongs (*shin minyō*) comprises songs rooted in indigenous styles from the early Shōwa era (1926–89) onwards. The textual content of such songs is often concerned with matters of social and historical import such as emigration, the sufferings of war and social change. While generally showing little evidence of Western influence, the musical language of these songs has gradually developed away from traditional styles. Although many songs in this genre have the ephemerality of much popular music, some have acquired a status as standard items in the folk music repertory, in particular those composed by Fukuhara Chōki (1903–81), one of the founders of this genre.

(ii) Art music

This denotes the music created and performed by the nobility during the age of the Ryukyuan kingdom primarily in the capital, Shuri, and the neighbouring city of Naha. Several of these genres are extinct, although efforts are being made to revive them.

(a) Extraneous genres

Chinese music entered Ryūkyū with the arrival in 1392 of immigrants from Fujian province after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Ming China and Ryūkyū. The earliest mention of the performance of music for ensembles of Chinese instruments, a genre known in Ryūkyū as *ozagaku*, dates from 1534. *Ozagaku* was performed before visiting Chinese embassies, on visits to the Japanese shogunal court at Edo after 1653 and at functions at the royal court in Shuri. Vocal music of the Ming and Qing dynasties was also performed on these occasions. Due to its association with diplomatic and court functions, however, *ozagaku* ceased to be performed after the dissolution of the kingdom of Ryūkyū in 1879.

Chinese processional music (Chin. *lubuyue*) was introduced in 1522 to enhance the majesty of royal processions. Known in Ryūkyū as *rojigaku*, this music featured three types of wind instrument (*sōna* double-reed pipe, *rappa* and *dōkaku* trumpets) and three types of percussion instrument (*ko* drum, *ryōhan* clappers and *dora* cymbals) and was an essential ingredient of royal and state processions until the dissolution of the kingdom. *Rojigaku* is now performed at the annual Shuri Festival, while the music of the *sōna* (*gakubura*) is performed at annual festivals in several villages in northern Okinawa Island. Confucian ceremonial music (*seibyōgaku*) and Chinese *qin* and flute pieces were also performed but are no longer extant.

The sole genre of Japanese art music to take root in Ryūkyū was the music of the *nō* theatre (see §VI, 1 above), both vocal (*yōkyoku*) and instrumental (*hayashi*). The practice of *nō* was popular even before the Satsuma invasion of 1609. Many of the leading figures in the indigenous art music tradition had backgrounds as *nō* performers. The Japanese 13-string long zither *koto* was introduced into Ryūkyū during the 18th century, together with several solo instrumental *danmono* pieces (a set of five short pieces beginning with *Takiotoshi sugagaki*, and versions of *Rokudan* and *Shichidan*) as performed in the Yatsuhashi school and three *koto* songs (*Sentō-bushi*, *Tsushima-bushi*, *Genji-bushi*) of uncertain Japanese provenance. However, the role of the *koto* in Okinawa has primarily been to provide an accompaniment to *sanshin* songs in the indigenous art tradition.

(b) The indigenous tradition

The earliest documented genre of indigenous Ryūkyū art music comprises the songs known as *omoro*, the texts of which appear in the major classic of Ryukyuan literature, the *Omorosōshi*, which was compiled in three stages in 1531, 1613 and 1623. The songs are thought to date from between the 12th and 17th centuries and were performed by an individual (or perhaps a guild of court musicians) known as Aka Inko or Omoro Neyagari, who has acquired legendary status as the founder of Okinawan music. Performances were given at court ceremonies by a male choir. Only 47 of the total of 1248 songs contained in the *Omorosōshi* appear to have been sung. This number had dwindled to a mere five by the late 19th century, and the tradition is now extinct. There was no formal notation for this style of

singing; the only glimpse available of the tradition can be gained from the scores in Western notation of the five *omoro* produced by the Okinawan researcher Yamanouchi Seihin in 1912, after a meeting with the last representative of the tradition.

The classical tradition of Ryukyuan art music consists primarily of a corpus of songs (*fushi*) accompanied by the *sanshin*, which are contained in anthologies known as the *kunkunshī*, a term referring to both the anthologies and the system of musical notation. Almost all the songs employ poetic texts in the indigenous *ryūka* form consisting of a single four-line verse of 8–8–8–6 syllables. A variant of the *ryūka* form is the syncretic *nakafū* form, which combines the 7–5 syllable structure of Japanese *waka* with the *ryūka*, resulting in texts with the syllabic structure 7(or 5)–5–8–6. The texts are sung in the Okinawan literary language based on Shuri dialect, the language of the Ryukyuan nobility.

The earliest extant *kunkunshī* is a single-volume work compiled by Yakabi Chōki in the mid-18th century. It contains the notation of the *sanshin* parts and *ryūka* texts of 117 songs that have remained the central items in the repertory. The *kunkunshī* used today in the largest school of performance, the Nomura-ryū, was compiled by Nomura Anchō and Matsumura Shinshin in 1869. Consisting of three main volumes and an appendix, the *Nomura kunkunshī* contains *sanshin* notation and texts of over 200 songs. The tradition of *sanshin*-accompanied song is now synonymous with Ryukyuan classical music and is maintained in three schools: Tansui, Nomura and Afuso.

The ordering of the songs in the *Nomura kunkunshī* accords approximately with the customary generic classification of the song repertory into *ha-bushi*, *nkashi-bushi*, pieces for solo rather than unison singing and regional folk songs.

The first volume, comprising 37 pieces, consists primarily of *ha-bushi*, relatively short and structurally simple songs originating within the art tradition. They are described in the aesthetic treatise *Gensei no maki* (1789) as being ‘imbued with the impermanent spirit of the floating world’. The volume begins with four songs (*Kajadifū-bushi*, *Unna-bushi*, *Nakagusuku hantamē-bushi*, *Kuti-bushi*) from a set of five that was originally performed on occasions when the king of Ryukyu was in attendance. This set, known as *Gujinfū gokyoku* (‘five pieces in the honourable presence’), continues to be the most frequently performed ‘suite’ (*chukusai*) in the repertory, sung at concerts and celebratory occasions of all kinds.

The second volume, comprising 29 pieces, consists primarily of *nkashi-bushi* (‘ancient songs’), a genre subdivided into *jun nkashi-bushi* (‘semi-ancient songs’), *nkashi-bushi* and *ufu nkashi-bushi* (‘great ancient songs’). *Nkashi-bushi* are described in *Gensei no maki* as ‘singing of the glory of past ages, when the world enjoyed such peace that not even the branches of trees were disturbed’. The ten pieces at the head of the second volume are the central items in the repertory. The first five (*Chikuten-bushi*, *Janna-bushi*, *Shui-bushi*, *Shudun-bushi*, *Akatsichi-bushi*) constitute a set referred to as *nkashi-bushi* in the narrow sense. The second five are interspersed with short songs, known generically as *chirashi*. These five pieces (*Chaya-bushi*, *Nkashihabira-bushi*, *Naga Janna-bushi*, *Naka-bushi*, *Jūshichihachi-bushi*) are the *ufu nkashi-bushi*. Although the conventional assumption that they predate other items in the repertory is clearly erroneous, they are the longest and the most complex and diverse pieces, both technically and structurally.

Whereas all the pieces in the first two volumes employ the *honchōshī* tuning of the *sanshin* (see § (iv)(a) below), the third volume begins with 34 pieces in the *niagi* tuning. The high tessitura of the vocal parts, the lyrical content and the relatively free metrical structure of these pieces suit them to solo singing.

The first five pieces in this volume (*Fishi-bushi*, *Kwamuchā-bushi*, *Sanyama-bushi*, *Nakafū-bushi*, *Shukkwē-bushi*) again constitute a set, in this case of solo songs. These are the principal solo items in the classical repertory and are often performed together at concerts (see fig.11 for notation and transcription of one version of *Nakafū-bushi*). The remaining items in the third volume are pieces in rare tunings and regional folk songs in the *honchōshī* tuning.

The fourth volume was compiled later than the first three volumes and contains approximately 60 pieces. It is an appendix to the three main volumes and consists of regional folk songs, especially from Yaeyama, arranged in the classical style, and other pieces not included in the earlier three volumes (e.g. instrumental interludes to *kumiodori* music dramas and arrangements of *danmono* pieces originally for the *koto*).

(iii) History

Owing to the paucity of documentary records relating to the early history of Ryūkyū in general, little is known of the early development of music there. Until the *sanshin* tradition became established during the 16th and 17th centuries, musical activity is likely to have focussed entirely on religious ceremonies. Asked about music in their country, two envoys sent to Korea in 1462 replied: ‘One performer claps his hands and sings, whereupon others join in … There is no instrumental court music’. The performance described here is likely to have been of *omoro*; the remarks indicate that sacred songs (*kamiuta*) retained a central place in music at this time. The earliest strata of Ryukyuan culture are present in the Miyako islands, where many *kamiuta* are still sung today. Most Miyako *kamiuta* employ a scale (*ritsu*; see §(v)(b) below) that is a feature of the earliest strata of Japanese music as a whole, suggesting their origins in a musical culture shared with Japan proper prior to the linguistic and cultural separation of Ryūkyū and Japan around the 4th and 5th centuries.

The first flowering of Ryukyuan culture occurred during the reign of King Shō Shin (1478–1526), who among his many achievements is reputed to have introduced instrumental music (‘flutes and strings’) into the court. This was the age when Ryūkyū engaged in a lively entrepôt trade with China, Japan and South-east Asia and imported cultural manifestations that laid the foundations for the future development of Okinawa’s diverse and cosmopolitan artistic culture.

The Chinese investiture envoy Chen Kan provided the earliest reference (1534) to what would appear to be Ryukyuan art music as we know it: ‘The music employs singing accompanied by stringed instruments. The sound is very melancholy’. One can infer therefore that this music became established among the Shuri nobility early in the 16th century. This dating is further supported by its coincidence with the period of transition in Okinawan literary history between the *omoro* and the *ryūka*, a transition in which the legendary figure of Aka Inko may have played a key role. The *ryūka* was the first indigenous Okinawan literary form to provide an outlet for personalized emotional expression, and music became its chosen medium.

The Japanese invasion of Ryūkyū in 1609 inevitably brought about an increase in Japanese influence to supplement the already strong degree of Chinese influence in the kingdom. Accomplishment in Chinese and Japanese arts became an essential attribute of any aspirant to government office. However, by the end of the century a cultural crisis of confidence had set in. The consequence was a self-conscious and productive attempt to uncover cultural roots and the great florescence of Ryukyuan culture during the 18th century.

The earliest historically verifiable figure of importance in music was Tansui *wēkata* Kenchū (1623–83), to whom composition of several extant pieces (including the five *nkashi-bushi*) is attributed. The Tansui school maintains a precarious existence today, although the complete repertory of the school consists of only the five *nkashi-bushi* together with two versions each of the *ha-bushi* pieces *Hai Chikuten-bushi* and *Agi Chikuten-bushi*.

Tamagusuku Chōkun (1684–1734), the functionary responsible for presenting performances to the party of Chinese envoys who visited Ryūkyū for the investiture of King Shō Kei in 1719, consolidated the traditional performing arts and devised the new form of music theatre, *kumiodori*. Influenced by Japanese *nō* and Chinese music drama but rooted in Okinawan legend, it employed an artificial, neo-classical form of language and was an early step towards the revival (if not invention) of a distinctive Ryukyuan cultural identity. The music of *kumiodori* dramas employs arrangements of pieces from the classical repertory.

The Nomura-ryū and the Afuso-ryū, the two leading modern schools of classical music, can be traced back in an unbroken line to Yakabi Chōki (1716–75). Yakabi was a practitioner of *nō* who transferred allegiance to Ryukyuan music after losing his eyesight. His foremost pupil was Chinen Sekkō (1761–1828), who in turn taught Nomura Anchō (1805–71) and Afuso Seigen (1785–1865), the founders of the modern schools. Controversy surrounds the precise route of transmission of the Tō-ryū school of which Yakabi was the founder, but it seems likely that Nomura simplified aspects of the tradition to make it more accessible to amateur practitioners.

Despite the popularity of Ryukyuan classical music in Okinawa today, the tradition is essentially a static one, with no new pieces created since the 18th century. In contrast, the folk music tradition has demonstrated considerable vitality. It is unclear precisely when the *sanshin*, which was originally the exclusive property of the nobility, made inroads among commoners. It seems likely that it was introduced during the early 19th century into village festivities and the revels known as *mō-ashibi*, in which young unmarried men and women would engage after working in the fields. The 20th century was a tragic one for Okinawa, and it was newly created songs accompanied by the *sanshin* that provided ordinary people with solace in the internment camps after World War II, and that played a major role in re-establishing Okinawan identity and self-confidence during the 27 years of post-war US military occupation.

(iv) Instruments, performance and aesthetics

(a) Instruments

Those used in Ryukyuan music are the *sanshin*, the *koto*, the *kokyū*, the flute and various drums. Many Chinese instruments were also commonly played in Ryūkyū, but most of these disappeared together with the tradition of Chinese music performance.

The principal instrument, the *sanshin*, acquired a certain status as the instrument of the leisured man of culture, similar in this respect to the long zither *qin* in China. Its use was originally restricted to the nobility, and it was made by a government department within the Kaizuri Bugyōsho (‘Shell-polishing’

Office) ministry. Various models were created under a rigorous system of quality control. Differing mainly with regard to the shape of the neck, the models include *Fēbaru* (the earliest type), *Chinen-dēku*, *Kuba-shunden*, *Kuba-nu-funi*, *Makabi* and *Yuna*, the last two types being most common today.

The *sanshin* is an adaptation of the Chinese Sanxian three-string plucked lute, which was introduced into Ryūkyū from China after the establishment of a Chinese community in the Kume-mura district of Naha some time after 1392. The *sanshin* was later introduced into Japan, where it served as the basis for development of the *shamisen* (see §II, 6 above). The *sanxian*, *sanshin* and *shamisen* have the same basic structure, consisting of a long neck inserted into a wooden body. The neck of the *sanshin* is made of ebony, red sandalwood or a similar hard wood. The best quality wood was formerly obtained from Yaeyama, but depletion of forest resources there has resulted in the wood being imported mainly from the Philippines. The fingerboard measures approximately 48 cm from the upper bridge to the body, which is covered on both sides with snakeskin obtained from a Thai python; it is slightly rounded and measures approximately 19 cm in length and width. The instrument has three strings, the first (lowest) known as the 'male string' (*ūjiru*), the second as the 'middle string' (*nakajiru*) and the third as the 'female string' (*mījiru*). In classical music it is sounded with a large finger-shaped plectrum made of water buffalo horn placed on the index finger of the right hand. In Amami, the instrument is sounded with a long bamboo sliver.

The basic right-hand playing technique involves a succession of downstrokes; upstrokes are used on weak beats. Stylized movements of the right hand are used on beats when the *sanshin* is silent. Changes of position are relatively rare in the left hand since, in contrast to the *shamisen*, all the required pitches can generally be obtained without such changes. When a change is required, no more than two positions are ever used. Left-hand finger technique employs only the index, middle and little fingers and includes striking a pitch on the fingerboard and holding it (*uchi-utu*), striking a pitch and immediately releasing it (*uchinuchi-utu*), and plucking the string one degree of the scale above the required pitch (*kachi-utu*).

The standard tuning for ensemble performance is *c–f–c′* (*honchōshī*), with the basic pitch varying depending on the range of the singer; solo performers may vary the tunings between *A–d–a′* and *d–g–d′*. *Niagi* is employed especially in solo songs; *ichiagi* (also known as *Tō-nu-tsindami*, 'Chinese tuning') is used in several pieces from Yaeyama and in the music for the Chinese-style drama *tāfākū*; and *sansagi* or *ichiniagi* is the most common tuning in modern folk song (ex.19).

The Koto used in Okinawan music is the long type of instrument (see also §II, 4 above), with the extra length required because of the relatively low pitch range of the instrument in Okinawa. It is played with rounded plectra set on the thumb, index finger and middle finger of the right hand, with the player kneeling square to the instrument. The *koto* is generally used in an accompanying role, with the two bottom strings employed only in the solo *danmono* pieces.

The *kokyū* bowed lute is a miniature version of the *sanshin* and was modelled in this respect on its Japanese counterpart. Like the flute, its function is to add colour to the main melodic line. Picture scrolls suggest that Chinese bowed lutes and flute were formerly used.

Percussion instruments include the ancient *chijin* drum used by priestesses, the *pārankū* single-headed drum used in *eisā* performances and the *sanba* wooden clappers used to enhance rhythmic excitement in fast music.

(b) Performance and aesthetics

After the spread of the *sanshin* among ordinary people, the instrument came to be used in many situations in which unaccompanied singing would formerly have been customary. In all genres incorporating the *sanshin*, the songs are sung by the *sanshin* players only.

Performance of the *sanshin* was originally restricted to male members of the nobility and the tradition continues to be a largely male preserve, except in modern folk music. Although the *koto* was also played only by men, the instrument is now performed in Okinawa almost entirely by women. The standard ensemble used in accompaniment to classical dance consists of two or three *sanshin*, one *koto*, one *kokyū*, one transverse flute and one pair of drums. Drums are not used in *nkashi-bushi* pieces. Concert performances are given by ensembles of various sizes, ranging from one *sanshin* and one *koto* to an unlimited number of performers of each instrument. Performances by around 50 players are common at amateur concerts in Okinawa.

The various vocal techniques employed in classical music are all named, and their realization is rigorously prescribed. Several are similar in name or realization to techniques used in *shōmyō* and *nō*, suggesting a possible direct influence from Japanese music. A wide tessitura is required of more than two octaves, from a 4th below the pitch of the bottom string of the *sanshin* to a 6th above the top string (i.e. *G* to *a′* when the first string is tuned to *c* and the top string to *c′*). The *sanshin* plays regularly on the main beats and anticipates similar melodic motion in the vocal part. As in Japanese *shamisen* music, simultaneous motion of voice and instrument is regarded as naive and unsophisticated. Distinctive features of the vocal line in classical music include the use of extensive melisma and long-held notes above a slowly moving accompaniment and, especially in solo songs, complex interaction between voice and instrument.

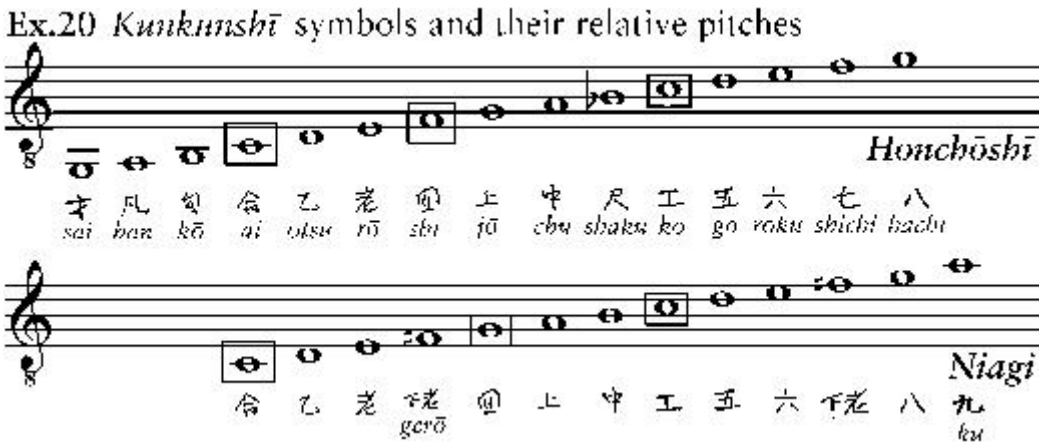
As befits a tradition originating in an aristocratic milieu dominated by Confucian ideology, the aesthetic principles underlying the music were codified. They are documented in two brief treatises on musical aesthetics, *Gensei no maki* (‘Treatise on strings and the voice’, 1789) and *Kadō yōhō* (‘Essential principles of the art of song’, 1845). The performance ideal is epitomized by the term *gensei itchi*, ‘unity of instrument and voice’. The unity extends further to posture, hand movements and all aspects of performance. Facile virtuosity is discouraged, and the importance of humility, effort and concentration is stressed. Such attributes have given music the status of an accomplishment whose main purpose is not so much to entertain listeners as to provide a vehicle for moral self-improvement. They have also discouraged the emergence of a class of professional musicians: music was and continues to be an essentially amateur pursuit.

(v) Notation and structure

(a) Notation system

The Ryukyuan notation system known as the *kunkunshī* is an adaptation of the Chinese *gongche* system (*see* China, People’s Republic of, and Table). However, whereas the *gongche* system is an absolute pitch notation, the *kunkunshī* is a tablature notation specifically for the *sanshin*. The starting point for the adaptation was the *Tō-nu-tsindami* tuning, and the names assigned to the pitches of the open strings correspond in the two systems. The symbols, together with their readings and relative pitches

in the two major tunings, are shown in ex.20 . The name *kunkunshī* is based on the Sino-Ryukyuan readings of the first three characters of the piece that prefaces the earliest extant edition of the *kunkunshī*, the mid-18th century *Yakabi kunkunshī* of Yakabi Chōki. Notated in the *gongche* system, this is the well-known Chinese piece *Lao Baban* (also *Baban*, *Liuban*).



Ex.21

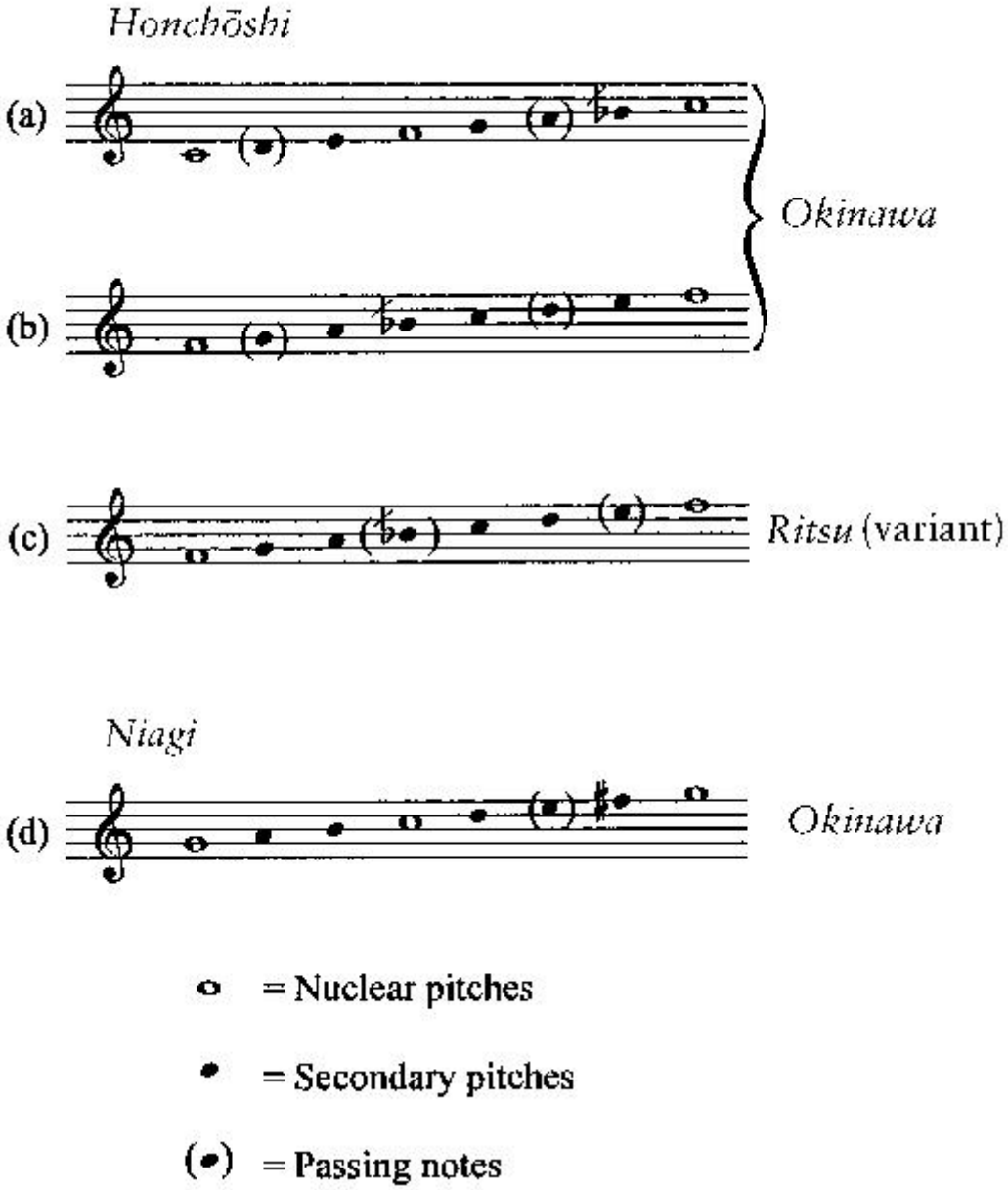
The *kunkunshī* system became increasingly precise over the two centuries following the *Yakabi kunkunshī*. Whereas Yakabi Chōki specified *sanshin* pitches alone with no indication of metre, the *kunkunshī* of his pupil Chinen Sekkō included circles to indicate single-beat rests and small characters and proportional notation to indicate motion with up to four subdivisions of a beat. The *Chinen kunkunshī* was also the first to employ a basic layout of 12 characters to the vertical column. The *Nomura kunkunshī* built on Chinen's innovation by placing each beat in a box, with 12 boxes and beats to a column and seven columns to a page. (In Chinen's system, the non-proportional placement of rests meant that the columns had varying numbers of beats.) The first edition of the *Nomura kunkunshī* to include vocal notation was produced by the Okinawan poet and musicologist Serei Kunio (1897–1950) and published between 1935 and 1941. It was based on the performance of the foremost Nomura school musician of the day, Isagawa Seizui (1872–1937).

Other *kunkunshī* anthologies include those of the Tansui school (1872) and the Afuso school (1912). *Kunkunshī* anthologies for the *koto* also exist, but these are notated in an adaptation of standard *koto* notation.

(b) Structural elements

The scale with the widest distribution throughout Ryūkyū is a variant of the *ritsu* scale (ex.21c). This appears especially in *kamiuta* and folk songs in the Yaeyama, Miyako and northern Okinawan regions. The scale more generally associated with the music of Ryūkyū, however, is the *Okinawa* scale and its variants (ex.21*a*, *b*, *d*). This scale is associated in particular with *sanshin* music, although it is not present in the Amami region, except in the southernmost islands where Okinawan music has entered.

Ex.21



Ex.22 Scales

There are four main features of the use of the *Okinawa* scale in classical music. First, a core pentatonic or hexatonic scale is present within the framework of an approximate diatonic series. Second, there may be either one or two tonal centres; when there are two, they fall on the first and fourth degrees (ex.21*a*, *d*). Third, the seventh degree in ex.21*a* and the fourth degree in ex.21*b* are approximately a quarter-tone flat and are inherently unstable. Finally, ex.21*d* is the only scale in which all pitches fall within a strict diatonic series. A variant of this scale in which only the first degree constitutes a nuclear pitch is the scale most commonly employed in modern folk music.

The formal structure of the music is determined largely by that of the song texts; there is no direct expressive linkage between texts and music. *Ryūka* texts generally appear in anthologies classified according to the piece (*fushi*) to which they are sung. In many cases, any of several dozen texts may be sung to a particular piece, and the music in no way represents a ‘setting’ of a specific verse. In the case of extended texts, the form in both classical and folk music is generally strophic, as in the *kuduchi*

genre. Various forms are used in the case of the *ryūka* texts to which the majority of songs are sung. *Ha-bushi* pieces in their simplest form have an *AA* form corresponding to the 8–8 and 8–6 lines of the text (e.g. *Guin-bushi*). In this case it is customary for two syllables in the last line to be repeated. *AA′* form involves compression of the musical material to accommodate the six-syllable length of the last line (e.g. *Chūjun-bushi*). Other *ha-bushi* pieces have a more complex structure, in which the music of the last two lines is repeated after an episode (e.g. *Kajadifū-bushi*, *Hanafū-bushi*). Others have no repetition of formal units (e.g. *Chin-bushi*) or may incorporate *hayashi-kotoba*, meaningless phrases or syllables unconnected with the meaning of the main text (e.g. *Chirurin-bushi*). The formal structure of *nkashi-bushi* is most commonly *AABC* (with B constituting an instrumental interlude), in which the music corresponding to the first line of the *ryūka* verse is repeated for the second line (e.g. *Akatsichi-bushi*). Many pieces, however, have formal structures of considerably greater complexity.

Every piece in the *sanshin* repertory incorporates a short instrumental passage (*utamuchi*) performed several times at the beginning and at the end of a song. In dance pieces this is repeated continuously as the dancers enter and leave the stage.

2. Ainu

The Ainu are an aboriginal people who once inhabited Hokkaidō, Sakhalin and the Kuril islands. Their music and culture link them to other Siberian peoples rather than to the ethnic Japanese. After World War II the Ainu on the Kuril islands and southern Sakhalin migrated to Hokkaidō, which is the only area they now inhabit. The present Ainu population is estimated at over 20,000, the great majority of whom are thought to be of mixed blood. With the dissolution of the tribal system, only a few elderly Ainu carried on the traditions described in the present tense below, but recent years have seen a revival of interest among Ainu as well as other Japanese.

(i) Music and incantation

Kazuyuki Tanimoto

Shamanism and animism are predominant in the religious life of the Ainu. Their everyday life is strictly governed by taboos and incantations, culminating in a bear sacrifice ritual commonly observed among the northern tribes. Singing, a major feature of Ainu music, is a part of their daily tribal life. Significant elements in Ainu music are the characteristic sounds ‘produced’ by animal deities (both favourable and unfavourable) who govern the distribution of daily provisions. These onomatopoeic sounds include songs and dances of independent genres such as *chikappo-reki* (‘birdsong’) and are also heard in dance-songs and ballads, for instance as the imitation of a snorting bear or a slithering snake. Most Ainu instrumental music is a stylization of animal cries and calls. The nonsense-syllable refrains such as ‘hessa!’ and ‘husse!’ used in various songs and dances stem from puffing to exorcize evil spirits. Such examples demonstrate the close relationship between Ainu music and the primitive Ainu religion.

(ii) Communal songs and dances

Kazuyuki Tanimoto

Of the various types of Ainu music the most important and numerous are the *upopo* (‘sitting song’) and *rimse* (‘dancing song’), both sung in relation to incantatory rituals such as those of the bear cult. The most outstanding feature of *upopo* is its polyphonic performance. The people, sitting in a circle, tap the beat on the lids of chests (*hokai*) and sing the *upopo* imitatively, like a canon with a lag of one beat. In this imitation the melodies are altered, or in the practice of the Ainu from Sakhalin, two different melodies are used as in double counterpoint. This results in a cacophony of sounds reflecting the etymology of the *upopo* (the chirping of birds). In such polyphony, unlike Western polyphony, distinction of each voice line is not intended. The cluster of sounds helps to exorcize evil spirits from the ritual sites, cultivate spiritual strength and produce a certain hypnotic transfixion. The Sakhalin Ainu also use a singing technique called *rekúx-kara*. Two women sit face to face with their hands cupped loosely between their mouths, thus forming a resonating passage. The timbre of their voices is then altered by opening and closing the hands to varying degrees. A similar technique is found among the North American Inuit.

The word *rimse* originated in the sound of stamping feet and clashing swords of the *niwen-horippa*, or ‘goosestep march’. This was performed on the occasion of tribal calamities in order to exorcize evil spirits. Ainu dancing is divided roughly into two categories. The first is non-descriptive dance with stylized movement patterns: *rimse* is sung to accompany this type of dance in responsorial fashion, with a leader (*iekey*) and a following group. On rare occasions it is sung antiphonally by two groups or sung in unison throughout. The second type of *rimse* is descriptive or dramatic with mimetic gestures. Included in this category are *chikap rimse* (‘bird dance’), which portrays flying birds, and *humpenere* (‘whale dance’), in which pantomimic action tells the story of an old blind woman who finds a whale’s carcass washed ashore and the subsequent division of the meat among the members of the tribe.

The Ainu depend on hunting and fishing for their subsistence. Since this type of labour demands quiet movements, there are no specific work songs connected with it. Work songs are limited chiefly to harvest songs of a religious nature, in which prayers are offered up for a plentiful harvest and the exorcism of evil spirits from the harvest. Thus, with a few exceptions such as the *iyuta-upopo* (‘pounding song’) and *chipo-haw* (‘rowing song’), there are hardly any work songs involving characteristic actions or rhythmic patterns connected with specific types of work.

(iii) Individual music

Kazuyuki Tanimoto

Typical of this genre are *yayshama*, in which an improvisatory effusion of emotions is inserted between repeated refrains of *yayshama-nena*; *yaykatekara*, a love song; and *iyohay-ochis*, a plaintive song on the subject of a broken heart. In any song of this kind the melodies are characterized by personal traits, and each melody can be identified with a specific member of the tribe. The Ainu lullaby (*ihumke*) is similar in this respect. One of its distinctive features is its peculiar manner of voice production: refrains are sung in high falsetto with a rolled tongue, to soothe a crying baby. Improvised words are repeated between refrains.

Ballads are divided into two major types, prosaic and prosodic. The former are epics the subject-matter of which is the myths on which the Ainu religion is founded; they are referred to as *kamui-yukara* (‘divine ballad’). Ballads of this type are relatively short and are told in the first person by the gods of nature – animal and plant gods. The other type of ballad is called *yukara* (‘human ballad’). The heroes

of these ballads are mortals, and their lives, wars and romances are dramatically told in the style of extended epics. *Kamui-yukara*, the older type, is derived from the form of oracles of mediums possessed by animal gods. Onomatopoeic motifs linked with the heroic animals are repeated, and the melody carrying the story is inserted between these refrains. The melodies may be a repetition of the refrain motifs or new recitative-like figures. *Kamui-yukara* gradually developed into *yukara*, in which human heroes play leading roles; it then lost its religious connotations. The refrains diminished and melodies became longer.

(iv) Structure and instruments

Kazuyuki Tanimoto

Ainu melodies are basically anhemitonic, although melismatic variation often occurs, and a heavy, breathy vibrato often obscures precise pitch. Most Ainu melodies use two or three notes, rather than using evenly all five notes of a pentatonic scale. In two-note melodies the intervals of the major 2nd, minor 3rd and perfect 4th are most common. In three-note melodies the third note is obtained by adding a tone to the nuclear interval of a perfect 4th; for example *a-c′-d′* or *g′-c′-d*. Arpeggiated melodies without dominant frame intervals also occur. Melodies are constructed by repeating motifs. With a few exceptions of hybrid metre, the basic metre in Ainu music is duple, and only rarely does the metre change during a piece.

Pentatonic melodies are common among the peoples surrounding the Ainu, but a detailed examination of the cadences, rhythm and dynamics of Ainu music shows that it is more closely related to the music of Siberian peoples and North American Indians than to that of the Japanese. A comparative analysis of Ainu melodies may shed some light on the history of the migration of peoples from Siberia to the North American continent via the Kuril and Aleutian islands.

Typical Ainu instruments are the *tonkori*, a five-string zither, and the *mukkuri*, a jew’s harp. Both terms are onomatopoeic derivations from the instruments’ sounds. The *mukkuri*, which is an ancient and widespread type of mouth harp, has a bamboo frame about 15 cm long, 1·5 cm wide and 0·5 cm thick. The *tonkori*, used mostly by Ainu from Sakhalin, has a hollow soundboard about 120 cm long, 10 cm wide and 5 cm thick. The player sits with the instrument resting against his shoulder or held in his arms while he plucks the strings with the fingers of both hands. The basic string tuning is in 4ths and 5ths (*a-d′-g′-c′-f′*), but there are some variants. A characteristic feature of the instrument is the star-like soundhole in its centre. When a ball is inserted into this hole, the instrument is thought to be given spiritual life. The *tonkori* was also formerly used as a ritualistic tool. The shaman’s *kačo*, a single-headed frame drum, is used by shamanistic mediums.

(v) Late 20th-century developments

David W. Hughes

By the 1970s the traditions discussed above were being practised in a living sense by a very few elderly Ainu. Since then, however, interest has grown among the Ainu themselves and more widely within Japan. This, and a heightened political awareness, has led to the establishment of various Ainu-related research or culture centres in Hokkaidō, including the Ainu Museum in Shiraoi. This trend has engendered an increase in folkloric performances, both at tourist-orientated facilities in Hokkaidō and

on stages elsewhere in Japan and abroad. Young Ainu are also taking an interest in their roots, as reflected in the albums of neo-traditional music by Oki, an Ainu who is an arts graduate of Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

Published research on Ainu music itself has remained sparse. Chiba Nobuhiko has begun to provide a flood of detailed analyses of *tonkori* music in particular, and other researchers will soon follow. Foreign researchers have perhaps been dissuaded by the challenge of learning both Japanese and Ainu languages.

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IX. Music in the period of Westernization

1. Introduction

David W. Hughes

The Meiji period (1868–1912) saw Japan open its doors to the outside world after more than two centuries of isolation. The government adopted a policy of thorough and rapid modernization and Westernization. Although the primary aim was to catch up militarily and economically with its rivals, the Confucian world view suggested that all spheres of culture were interlinked; thus the education system and even the performing arts also had to be modernized.

The sections that follow describe developments since the onset of Westernization in three distinct music spheres in Japan: the Western classical music world; the world of popular musics, both Western-style and Japanese; and the world of *hōgaku*, Japanese traditional classical and theatre musics (for the world of folk song, see §VII above). These three spheres, while developing in relative isolation from each other, also interacted in significant ways. Japanese composers in the Western idiom have, perhaps ironically, come ever more to draw on their Japanese roots, Tōru Takemitsu and Minoru Miki being prime examples. Traditional musicians seeking new directions have primarily turned to the West, although to varying degrees. Popular composers of the early 20th century often worked in three idioms: Western-style compositions (albeit with Japanese lyrics); 'new folk songs' in near-traditional style; and a hybrid that draws on the pentatonic major and minor scales. The more adventurous among recent pop musicians reflect globalization by mixing Western, Japanese and other elements in the best

post-modern tradition. Recent years, for example, have seen arrangements by commercial musicians of *shōmyō* with other instruments and musical styles (e.g. synthesizer, *shamisen*) or for the concert stage (see under RECORDINGS below).

Given that the national education curriculum has since the 1870s virtually excluded traditional music, it might be surprising that the latter survives at all. Western elements are indeed in the ascendant, but indigenous elements remain strong (see §4 below).

2. Western art music

Masakata Kanazawa

(i) To 1945

European music was introduced to Japan by Portuguese and Spanish missionaries in the mid-16th century, but the ban on Christianity (1588) and the isolationist policy (after 1639) stopped the development of imported music (see §IV, 4 above). When the restrictions were lifted at the Meiji Restoration (1868), European music was again imported, with fresh vigour and unusual rapidity, in the form first of military band music and then of Protestant hymns. The Meiji government actively encouraged the broad diffusion of Western music, and the new school system (1872) adopted a European style of singing in its curriculum. The Music Study Committee, founded by the government in 1879 and headed by Izawa Shūji, welcomed the cooperation of foreign teachers such as Luther W. Mason, Franz Eckert and Rudolf Dittrich; in 1887 it became the country's first music academy, the Tokyo Music School. *Ongaku zasshi*, the first music journal, began publication in 1890; the first opera performance, a scene from Gounod's *Faust*, took place in 1894. By 1900 concerts were popular, particularly piano, violin and song recitals.

Japanese composers of Westernized music, who began to be active around 1900, at first specialized in songwriting; Taki Rentarō's *Kōjō no tsuki* ('Moon at a desolate castle', 1901) is probably the most famous song of the period. Yamada Kōsaku, who studied in Germany and became the leading composer of the time, made the first attempt to compose orchestral works and operas (about 1912). After 1915 an increasing number of European visitors (some of them, like Prokofiev, refugees from the Russian Revolution) further encouraged musical activities. By 1930 the list of visitors included the violinists Zimbalist, Kreisler, Heifetz and Thibaud, the pianists Godowsky and Levitsky, the singers McCormack, Fleta and Galli-Curci, the guitarist Segovia, and opera companies from France and Russia.

Yamada and his contemporaries were strongly influenced by German Romanticism. After World War I other European schools, such as French impressionism, were influential, and some composers began to use elements of traditional Japanese music in their works. For example, Shin Nihon Ongaku (New Japanese Music), led by Yoshida Seifū and the *koto* performer and composer Miyagi Michio, aimed to perform compositions in European styles with Japanese instruments. Vocal compositions in folksong style or for children were particularly popular.

By 1930 contemporary European movements were quickly transmitted to Japan, and as a result Japanese composers began to write in a variety of styles, including nationalist and futurist. The Shinkō Sakkyokuka Renmei (organized in 1930 by 16 younger composers) rapidly grew into a large organization and in 1935 was renamed the Nihon Gendai Sakkyokuka Renmei and became the

Japanese branch of the ISCM. Several smaller composers' associations that had been organized at this time were dissolved at the beginning of World War II, when all musical activities were strictly controlled by the military government.

(ii) Since 1945

After the war musicians made a prompt start to recover and catch up with the international standards of modern music, and development was rapid. Orchestras and opera groups were organized, and new music colleges and schools were established according to the new educational system. In 1946 the Ministry of Education decided to sponsor an arts festival to be held every autumn, including many musical events. In the same year the pre-war organization of the Nihon Gendai Sakkyokuka Renmei was reconstituted as the Nihon Gendai Ongaku Kyōkai (Japanese Society for Contemporary Music). Many smaller groups of composers were organized to further individual activities, the more important being the Shinsei Kai (members including Shibata Minao, Irino Yoshirō and Toda Kunio, 1946), the Shin Sakkyokuka Kyōkai (including Kiyose Yasuji and Matsudaira Yoritsune, 1947), the Jikken Kōbō (including Takemitsu Tōru and Yuasa Jōji, 1951), the Group of Three (Akutagawa Yasushi, Dan Ikuma and Mayuzumi Toshirō, 1953), the Yagi no Kai (including Hayashi Hikaru and Mamiya Yoshio, 1953) and the Shinshin Kai (with Ikenouchi Tomojirō, Bekku Sadao, Miyoshi Akira and others, 1955). The most controversial movement of the time was dodecaphony, which most composers tried at least once. Some composers still used 19th-century styles, some pursued nationalistic trends, and some participated in avant-garde movements. In 1953 *musique concrète* was introduced into Japan, and in 1955 the NHK Electronic Music Studio was opened in Tokyo.

After 1960 Japanese composers started to be more individualistic. The remarkable progress in the quality of their work has produced several internationally known composers. The variety of their activities has been such that practically all Western movements have been quickly transmitted and have counterparts in Japan. In addition there have been movements unique to Japan, notably the composition and performance of works in modern idioms on Japanese instruments. The Hōgaku Yonin no Kai, a group of four players of Japanese instruments formed in 1957, commissioned a series of new compositions for their concerts, encouraging composers to familiarize themselves with Japanese instruments. The Ensemble Nipponia (Nihon Ongaku Shūdan), a group of European-style composers and performers using Japanese instruments, was established in 1964; it made many international tours and was active until the 1990s.

The Society of 20th-Century Music, founded in 1957, sponsored a summer festival like that at Darmstadt until 1965. The Japan Philharmonic SO has commissioned new orchestral works annually since 1958 (except for the years 1972 and 1973), among them important compositions by Yashiro, Takemitsu, Shibata, Mamiya and Miyoshi. The Japanisches-Deutsches Festival für Neue Musik (1967–70), sponsored by the Tokyo German Culture Centre, was significant in the promotion of modern music, as was the festival Music Today, directed by Takemitsu (1973–92). The Kusatsu Summer International Music Festival, founded in 1980, has commissioned new Japanese works every year, while the Suntory Music Foundation, founded in 1969, has commissioned and published new works and promoted concerts of Japanese music; since 1991 it has also awarded the annual Akutagawa Prize for the best orchestral work by a young Japanese composer.

While composers continued to pursue novel styles and techniques, radical avant-garde movements gradually waned after 1970. Many composers, including Ichiyanagi, Shibata and Takemitsu, cultivated an eclectic range of styles, from tonal lyricism to aleatory techniques. Shibata's *Oiwake-bushi kō* (1973) was the first example of a new genre that the composer called a 'theatre piece', somewhat similar to the *musikalisches Theater* of Kagel and Ligeti but drawing on traditional and folk melodies. Its success had a decisive influence on Japanese composers of the 1980s and 90s, who created an increasing number of works calling for stage action. From the mid-1980s opera, both European and Japanese, enjoyed growing popularity, culminating in the opening in 1997 of the New National Theatre, the first Western-style opera house in Japan. Leading Japanese composers of opera include Hara, Miki, Dan and Hayashi, who collaborates with the Konnyaku-za opera group.

The adaptation of traditional Japanese music to European-style composition had become commonplace by the 1980s, when some composers began to look to non-Western (especially Asian) music for their inspiration. The Japanese Society for Contemporary Music (numbering 214 members in 1999) has sponsored an annual festival of contemporary music since 1962 and has awarded the Sakkyoku Shinjin Shō to a young composer since 1984. The Nihon Sakkyokuka Kyōgikai (Japanese Federation of Composers), founded in 1962 to protect composers' rights, has sponsored concerts, published music and, in collaboration with the Suntory Music Foundation, has since 1981 published a biennial catalogue of works by Japanese composers. By 1999 its membership had reached 560.

Japanese influence on music in Europe and North America has been felt in several respects. The educational philosophy of Suzuki Shin'ichi, manifested since 1933 in his method of violin teaching, has been applied extensively to the teaching of the violin and other string instruments, the flute and the piano. Japan has also become an important manufacturer not only of reproducing equipment but also of pianos, string and wind instruments; leading firms are Yamaha, Nippon Gakki and Kawai.

3. Popular music

Linda Fujie

The musical forms treated here as 'popular' comprise those most often associated with the rise of the mass media, specifically printed media, recordings, radio, cinema and television. While most musical genres performed in Japan have been disseminated through print and recordings or broadcast at one time or another, particular genres have developed in close conjunction with the mass media and the socio-musical expectations of their audiences.

(i) To 1945

Many genres of Japanese music associated today with the Western concept of 'popular music' originated during the Meiji era (1868–1912). The terms *hayariuta* and, later, *ryūkōka* (both literally meaning popular songs) have been used as broader concepts that subsume specific popular song forms. Many such popular songs have texts that are related to current events or social trends and are relatively short-lived in popularity. In contrast to traditional folksongs, composers and lyricists of popular songs are individually identifiable and some gain considerable fame. With some exceptions, especially among jazz-influenced forms, purely instrumental music has played a secondary role in Japanese popular musical life.

During the Meiji period, the introduction of Western culture and concepts of democracy and liberalism deeply affected the Japanese political as well as musical scene. Particularly in urban centres such as Tokyo and Osaka, emerging popularistic political movements enlisted support through a new kind of speech-song called *enka*. With texts related to the goals of the Jiyū Minken Undō (People's Democratic Rights Movement), *enka* songs were heard in music halls and tea houses as well as outdoors on street corners, where broadsheets containing the lyrics were sold. Owing to the songs' directly political nature, the lyrics were considered of greater importance than the melody, so early *enka* were usually half-shouted and half-chanted to emphasize the texts clearly. In using this technique they were influenced by the style of *rakugo*, comic storytelling that was performed in variety halls. Early examples of this kind of *enka* include *Dainamaito-bushi* ('Dynamite Song') and *Oppekepē*. Later, other traditional song genres that had developed in Japan's urban tea houses and theatres influenced the melodic and performing style of *enka*, including *shinnai-bushi*, *gidayū-bushi*, *kouta* and *zokkyoku*.

In the late Meiji and the Taishō periods, political and social events continued to shape *enka* lyrics. The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–5 made popular composed songs on patriotic and military themes (*gunka*), often accompanied by the *genkan* lute. Again during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05, *gunka* from the Sino-Japanese War were revived, and new patriotic songs were composed. In between these two conflicts, however, economic depression and the growth of socialism once more produced socially critical song texts. In addition, everyday events and humorous topics also found a place in *enka* lyrics. From 1907 the violin sometimes replaced the *shamisen* as accompanying instrument, as heard in recordings of *Nonki-bushi* (1918).

In 1896 the first gramophones were imported into Japan for sale, and traders soon discovered that Japanese consumers preferred indigenous music to that from the West. Early recordings were made in Japan by *kouta* and *gidayū-bushi* singers, manufactured in England or America and then re-shipped to Japan. In 1907 an American-Japanese record company (Nichibei Chikuonki Manufacturing Company, the predecessor of Nippon Columbia) was established, soon followed by other companies building factories and founding sales outlets for a quickly growing market. By 1926, the monthly sales of Nichibei Chikuonki alone had reached 150,000 records and 5000 phonographs.

The rise of hit songs spurred on this economic development. One of the earliest was *Kachūsha no uta* ('Song of Katherine', composed by Nakayama Shinpei), a ballad of 1914 that sold 200,000 copies. While this song dealt with a foreign theme (it was composed for the Tolstoy play *Resurrection*) and displayed a mixture of European harmonies and Japanese scales, most hit songs of this period remained 'Japanese' in sound. Accompanied by *shamisen*, using *yō* or *in* scales and containing lyrics in traditional poetic forms, popular songs of the early days of phonograph recordings sound similar to the *kouta* of the tea houses, *gidayū-bushi* or folksongs. In addition to the few examples of 'exotic' European-type songs, other important genres showing Western influence include *shōka*, children's school songs, and the previously mentioned *gunka* military songs. The former were composed from the mid-1880s specifically for use in school instruction and were disseminated through school textbooks. *Shōka* school songs often used the so-called *yonanuki* ('fourth and seventh [degrees of the major or minor scale] omitted') scale (see §I, 4 above). They were short, easy to learn songs, written in verse form and having metres of 4/4, 2/4 or (less frequently) 3/4 or 6/8. In the classrooms, these tunes were accompanied by piano or *orugōru* music box. *Gunka* such as *Taishō gunka*, which was composed by Yamada Gen'ichirō in 1894 during the Sino-Japanese War, appeared at the same time as *shōka* and also used the *yonanuki*

scale. Many of these, which were used to bolster fighting spirit among soldiers both at home and abroad, feature a steady march beat and an instrumental accompaniment emphasizing Western military and drum instruments.

The rise of popular song genres such as *enka* and *gunka* stimulated the development of a new occupation: the professional songwriter. Nakayama Shinpei (1887–1952), originally a grammar school teacher, gained instant fame with *Kachūsha no uta* and in his lifetime wrote over 2000 songs. The best known of these include *Gondora no uta* (‘Gondola Song’, 1915), *Sendō kouta* (‘Boatman’s *kouta*’, 1921) and *Tōkyō ondo* (1933; see §VII, 3 above). In the course of his career, Nakayama often took advantage of the relationship between popular song and theatre (later films), linking some songs with a particular play or film and vice versa. Later in his career he felt more drawn to Japanese folk music and composed songs in folk style, using a *yonanuki* scale mostly in minor mode. Koga Masao (1904–78) gained fame with *Sake wa namida ka tameiki ka* (‘Is Sake Tears or Sighs?’, 1931) and from an early age wrote under contract for different record companies. He developed his own musical style (the so-called ‘Koga melody’) that used the *yonanuki* scale and Japanese-style vibrato and ornaments in the voice (*yuri* and *kobushi*). Many of his numerous hits were sung by Fujiyama Ichirō (*b* 1911), so that the two names became inextricably associated with one another in the popular song world.

The years between the Taishō era (1912–26) and the beginning of World War II saw significant turbulence in Japan’s society and economy. Due to improvements in medical care and general quality of life, Japan’s population almost doubled between 1910 and 1940. This meant that Japan, previously self-sufficient in raw goods and agriculture, now required imports from abroad and ever larger amounts of exports to pay for them. In addition, economic depressions and a dramatic population shift to the cities created social unrest that could not be easily pacified by the weak central political powers. The impoverished tenant farmers resented the relatively comfortable life of urban dwellers, and the growing Western-influenced popular culture (including songs that referred to jazz, alcohol and couple-dancing) was criticized by rightists as ‘anti-Japanese’.

Interestingly, it was particularly in periods of economic hardship and social unrest that the record industry grew at astounding rates. Record sales rose over 60% between 1929 and 1931. The rise of star singers such as Fujiyama and Awaya Noriko (*b* 1907), who both consistently produced hit songs throughout the 1930s, spurred on record consumption and the newly-developing radio industry. Awaya became known as the ‘Blues Queen’ for hit songs such as *Wakare no Burūzu* (‘Separation Blues’, 1937) and *Ame no Burūzu* (‘Rain Blues’, 1938), both of which were composed by Hattori Ryōichi (1907–93). The Japanese version of a blues sound was created through the use of the minor *yonanuki* scale (see §I, 4 above) and evenly-accented, moderate 4/4 rhythms to the accompaniment of a brass-dominated jazz orchestra. As the military rose in influence in the years preceding World War II, *gunka* from previous wars and new military songs became popular. *Roei no uta* (‘Bivouac song’, 1937), with lyrics pledging victory and courageous deeds and set to trumpet fanfares and drums, was a particularly popular *gunka*, selling 600,000 copies. Popular songs of the World War II period reveal many titles dealing with current events, particularly with the war in the Pacific and Asia, and appealing to patriotic feelings. Some of the non-militaristic songs that were popular at this time were originally composed for films; close ties between films and popular songs had already developed in the 1930s.

(ii) Since 1945

The end of the war was followed by a flood of occupying forces, primarily American troops that established their own radio stations and spread American tastes in popular music. Some post-war hit songs reflect this trend, such as *Tōkyō Bugiugi* (‘Tokyo Boogie Woogie’, 1948), which is written in a major scale and sung without any trace of traditional Japanese vocal technique. There also appeared in the post-war years many translations of American and European hits, such as *Tennessee Waltz* (1952) and *Que sera, sera* (1956). On the other hand, elements of Japanese folksong, such as mode and rhythm, play an important role in the songs made popular by Misora Hibari (1937–89), one of the most beloved singers and actresses of the post-war era. Making her debut as a child singer in 1949, she gained fame with such *enka* as *Ringo oiwake* (‘Apple *oiwake*’, 1952). Misora, Shimakura Chiyoko (*b* 1938) and male singers including Mihashi Michiya (1930–96), Minami Haruo (*b* 1923) and Frank Nagai (*b* 1932) all contributed toward the evolving postwar *enka*, which contained sentimental, sad lyrics and were sung with *yuri* and *kobushi* ornamentations in a *yonanuki* minor scale.

The rise of postwar *kayōkyoku*, in which predominantly Western scales and singing styles were used, coincided with the increased popularity of Japanese forms of Western popular styles. The term ‘group sounds’ was used to designate the Japanese reaction in the 1960s towards British and American pop groups, represented by groups such as The Tigers and The Spiders. At about the same time, the *fōku* (‘folk’) movement emerged, also influenced by Western music, specifically new folk and protest music. This phenomenon coincided with the ascent of the singer-songwriter, such as Yoshida Takurō (*b* 1946) and Minami Kōsetsu (*b* 1949), a figure who made a break from the former system of composers and lyricists working for record companies and writing for particular singers under contract to those companies. The audiences for their songs were made up of young, urban and well-educated members of the postwar generation.

The 1970s saw the rise of *nyū myūjikku* (‘new music’), or music written by singer-songwriters in a contemporary, Western-influenced ‘folk’ style with personal, introverted lyrics. The melody (often in the natural minor scale and containing short phrases) and the text it conveys are considered more important than the rhythmic basics or instrumental accompaniment. Another form of Western-style Japanese music is simply called *poppusu* (‘pops’), which is sung by, and appeals to, young teenagers.

Even before the advent of MTV, television developed in Japan in close coordination with popular music and music makers. Soon after going on the air in 1953, NHK (Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, Japan Broadcasting Corporation) began to produce television programmes that starred current popular singers. In addition to several weekly programmes, one perennial favourite is the *Kōhaku uta-gassen* (‘Red-White Song Competition’), which is broadcast every New Year’s Eve and features the year’s most popular singers, divided into teams of females and males and performing their latest hits in front of millions of viewers, with a jury deciding the winning team.

There is currently a wealth of popular genres in Japan, including some, such as *enka* and certain forms of *kayōkyoku*, that are unique to the country. At the same time, Japanese versions of Western popular forms such as rock, rap, punk, heavy metal, and country and western are performed in clubs and broadcast throughout the county. Electronic and broadcasting technology (including phonographs, radio, television, video, CD players, synthesizers and computers) has played an important role not only in the Japanese economy but also in the multi-faceted way in which Japanese popular music has evolved.

4. Traditional music

Elizabeth Falconer

Traditional music in Japan (*hōgaku*) was greatly affected by the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Compositional constructions, playing techniques and performing practices of the various guilds have all changed in varying degrees, due in part to the strong influence of Westernization. Despite the ongoing productivity and creativity found within the various genres of traditional music, it remains secondary to Western music in the society at large. From the construction in 1883 of the Rokumeikan Hall, where European waltzes were played in an attempt to impress Westerners with how civilized the Japanese people were, to the three days of Western classical music played on the national radio station in honour of Emperor Hirohito at the time of his death in 1989, Western music has been used to represent a cultured society in Japan.

In education, a cursory nod is given to one or two traditional pieces in elementary and high schools, and only a few institutions of higher education, the most notable of which is Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, offer *hōgaku* studies. Since the modern Japanese school system offers as part of its curriculum only Western music, anyone who wants to learn a traditional instrument does so through private lessons, usually by becoming a member of a school that is part of the *iemoto* guild system (see §I, 3 above), which regulates private studies through a pyramid-type structure of performance certification. This system receives some criticism today from the general public as an outdated form of arts education, but it continues to stand as the main path for exposure to traditional music. Thus, the style of learning through the development of loyalties to a master musician associated with a certain style of performance remains largely unchanged. In 1999, however, the Ministry of Education decreed that all schoolchildren must from 2002 undergo performance tuition in at least one instrument. How this will be executed and received remains to be seen (and heard).

Several important figures incorporated Western musical concepts into Japanese music and brought their own genius to work towards both revolutionizing and preserving traditional music. The ‘Father of Modern Japanese Music’, Miyagi Michio(1894–1956), not only first incorporated Western musical concepts such as chamber-style structures and theme and variations, but further expanded the techniques and tunings for the *koto*. Miyagi also designed the 17-string bass *koto* in 1921, an instrument that remains popular today. His *Haru no umi* (‘Spring Sea’) for *koto* and *shakuhachi* is one of the few *hōgaku* works recognized by nearly everyone in Japan. Miyagi was further able to reach a wide audience by travelling abroad, performing with prominent Western musicians such as Isaac Stern and effectively utilizing the newly developed radio and early recording equipment. *Koto* master Nakanoshima Kin’ichi (1904–84) was also a creative innovator who incorporated new concepts without compromising the essence of the ancient instruments, writing with an increasingly international perspective that was influenced by China and India as well as the West. Other performer-composers include Shūrestu Miyashita and Enshō Yamakawa. This phenomenon of looking for inspiration for their instruments from an internationally influenced perspective, as well as combining Japanese instruments with Western and Eastern instruments, continued in the latter half of the 20th century in works by Shin’ichi Yuize, Hōzan Yamamoto, Seihō Kineya and Tadao Sawai.

Composers from outside the performance tradition have also taken an increasing interest in traditional music. They include Shimizu Osamu, Mamiya Michio, Takemitsu Tōru, Miki Minoru, Nagasawa Katsutoshi and Moroi Makoto. There has been a general trend away from imitation of the Western

tradition to a more individualized expression that is attentive to the aesthetics of traditional Japanese music. Some of the more recent works that reflect these values are Takemitsu's *November Steps* and Miki's *Jōruri*, both of which have received critical acclaim abroad as well as in Japan. More recently, non-Japanese composers such as Cage, Stockhausen and Gubaydulina have had their compositions for Japanese instruments performed in Japan and have become intrigued with incorporating Japanese musical concepts into music for Western ensembles. An increase in the number of proficient non-Japanese musicians, most noticeably *shakuhachi* players, has also brought an international flavour to the performance tradition. 'World Music' has both influenced and been influenced by contemporary composers and musicians.

Since the mid-1980s, appreciation of Japanese music has been undergoing a minor renaissance in Japan, most likely linked to Japan's rising economic power in the world economy, which has resulted in a more general rediscovery of national pride, coupled with a growing foreign interest in things of a traditional nature. There are *hōgaku* concerts each month in Japan's larger cities. The July 1996 edition of the monthly *Hōgaku Journal* lists no fewer than 98 live performances in the Kantō area (mainly Tokyo), 25 performances in the Hokkaidō/Tōhoku region, 23 in the Chūbu region, 24 in the Kansai region, 4 in Chūgoku/Shikoku/Kyūshū regions, and several abroad, including tours in the Middle East, Europe and South-east Asia. The *hōgaku* listings include classical, contemporary, improvisational and folk styles, with a variety of traditional instrumentation. The performances include student recitals, solo recitals, and large and small ensembles. Most schools have an annual performance in which all of the students take part, and many of the *hōgaku* ensembles perform once each season, so there is rarely a lack of activity. While performance groups such as the Nihon Ongaku Shūdan (Ensemble Nipponia, also known as Pro Musica Nipponia), established in 1964, continue to be active today, the past ten years have been witness to a surge of new ensembles made up of highly proficient players, and the trend towards public performance in addition to performances with one's guild has steadily increased. There are concerts where only *kimono* are worn and the performers kneel on the floor, or where evening gowns are worn and the performers sit on chairs and the conductor is present, or where casual clothing is worn and the performers move freely about the stage with their instruments. The English word 'recital', first used for traditional music in 1902, has now been joined by phrases such as 'live', 'super session' and 'joint concert'. The new generation of *hōgaku* musicians is also making use of technological advances for CD recordings, videos, electronic instruments and the Internet.

The government has provided limited but steady support towards the preservation of traditional music. Prominent traditional musicians have been nominated as Ningen Kokuhō ('Living National Treasures'), and the annual Geijutsushō award for an outstanding performance includes a traditional category. Since 1955 NHK (the Japan Broadcasting Corporation) has sponsored a one-year course for young students of traditional music, which culminates with a nationally broadcast performance. NHK also invites performers to audition for radio performances on a regular basis; it commissions works and regularly airs a programme that features contemporary music for traditional instruments. Since 1966 the National Theatre has sponsored a yearly concert that features top *hōgaku* musicians giving premières of new works. The National Theatre also sponsors concerts where ancient Eastern instruments are reconstructed and where works are commissioned and performed by *hōgaku* musicians. Any of these performances might feature musicians from various guilds.

Several important changes in the three principal Japanese instruments (see §II, 4, 5 and 6 above) have also had an impact on compositional and performing practices. The 17-string bass *koto* designed by Miyagi in 1921 has primarily been used as a *koto* ensemble instrument, but recently such performers

as Sawai Kazue, who studied under Miyagi, have expanded its use as a solo instrument. The 20-string *koto* (which now has 21 strings), designed in 1969 and originally created to accommodate Western scales more easily, is used by several ensembles and can be a solo instrument as well (since 1991 it sometimes has 25 strings). There has been some experimentation with *shamisen* size or with increasing the number of holes on the *shakuhachi*, but for the most part these have not taken hold. While silk *koto* strings continue to be used by some schools, most schools replaced them with nylon strings in the 1970s, then changed to a sturdy tetron string in the early 80s. There has been some controversy over the issue of traditional use of ivory for *koto* bridges, picks and *shamisen* plectra, but these parts are gradually being replaced by plastic with virtually no change in sound.

There has been some unrest throughout many of the genres of the *hōgaku* world regarding the continuation of the *iemoto* guild system. While lesson costs are for the most part reasonable, the pyramid structure, which expects students to meet rising expenses such as hall rental and individual performance certification, along with traditional spending practices surrounding gift-giving as a sign of appreciation, is beginning to be questioned. Schools have responded in different ways, but the tendency has been towards some weakening of traditional structures. Issues of this sort have been addressed in various publications such as *Hōgaku Journal*. In many ways, this tension between new versus old, change versus tradition, is as much an issue today as it was in 1868. The important difference is the lively musical dialogue reaching across cultures and an ever-sharpening appreciation and awareness of Japanese aesthetics by the international community and by the people of Japan themselves.

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