

Transmission Through Beginner Music for Multi-Genre Instruments: An Analysis of Shamisen Beginner Music by Kineya Seihō

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Introduction

This paper analyzes beginner music for *shamisen*, a three string Japanese lute, by performer and composer Kineya Seihō (1914-1996) to reveal how standardizing a multi-genre instrument can both re-invigorate as well as cripple its music within an educational setting.

The focus of this analysis is those essential *shamisen* performance and musical techniques that have historically been hard to notate in western notation or explain through western music theory. Shamisen music researcher and ethnomusicologist Yoshihiko Tokumaru labels these shamisen techniques as a part of “unseen theory” (「見えない理論」)¹. Shamisen music, unlike traditional western music, expresses through contrasting sounds and timbres, fluctuating rhythmic patterns and time, and nuanced performance techniques. Therefore, the goal of this analysis is to reveal shamisen’s essential traditional techniques for musical expression, how this has been historically transmitted, and how it has come to be represented in Kineya Seihō’s beginner compositions.

1. Traditionally Teaching Shamisen to Beginners

1-1. Creation of Number Notations

Since its popularity during the Edo period (1603-1868), shamisen was developed to meet the needs of the multiple musical genres. There are at least ten singing style shamisen genres and nine narrative style shamisen genres, all with their own performance practices and versions of the physical shamisen instrument. Furthermore, each genre of shamisen can also be broken down into multiple playing schools, called *iemoto*, which also have individualized playing styles. Simply, there is no end to how many divisions, categories

and differing playing styles there are for shamisen music.

Historically, there was no standard practice of clearly notating shamisen compositions. Students learned by ear, mimicking their teacher's playing style, interpretation of fluctuating rhythms, and nuanced pitch selection until perfecting each composition in the standard repertory². Because this is at the core of shamisen playing, many teachers today still prefer to not rely on notation when teaching and instead focus on ear training³.

After the introduction of western music in Japan, there have been many attempts, with various degrees of success, to transcribe shamisen music into western notation; most notably by Shouhei Tanaka (1862-1945)⁴ and Minoru Miki (1930-2011)⁵. However, because western notation's limitations at effectively transcribing shamisen's more nuanced performance and rhythmic techniques, many professionals still find the use of it frustrating⁶. Not wanting the essential aspects of each shamisen genre's music to be destroyed, the practical use of western notation within shamisen lessons has been limited at best. However, for a modern audience, the development of a shamisen number notation has been essential to continue training new beginners who are no longer familiar enough with traditional music to learn new pieces only by ear.

Number notations were developed uniquely for each shamisen genre to better reinforce *that* genre's essential sound patterns, rhythmic base, and overall structure. These number notations are used regularly in lessons to help support ear training, and are used for both traditionally and newly composed compositions⁷. Today, the most commonly used number notations for beginners and new music are *tate-fu* (縦書ワク式楽譜), *kenseikai-fu* (研精会譜) and, most simplistic of the all, *bunka-fu* (文化譜)⁸.

1-2. Teacher Student Relationship

"Traditional" shamisen lessons contain two main pedagogical practices. Firstly, the students observe other students' lessons to familiarize themselves with the overall repertory and shamisen's sound. Secondly, students actively mimic the teacher's hand and arm movements, body position, and nuanced timing practices. Even with the use of number notations, these training methods remains essential to learn how to musically express through differing sound colors and nuanced rhythms. As shamisen professional Kineya Sakukichi said in regards to the importance of separating oneself from notation during lessons, "Looking at the notation is the same as playing with your eyes. However, *shamisen* is played with the ears. Just this (playing with the ears) is what makes it music. Through the ears there is no limit and each time you practice your art can be polished to

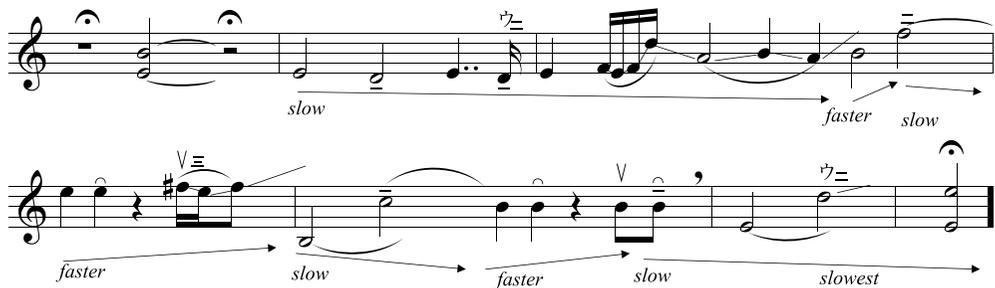
perfection”⁹. The key to shamisen music is training through the ears, not notation. Even while conducting participation field work, from May to September of 2018, on shamisen playing for *hanawa-bayashi*, a percussive musical genre that has continued performing for over 300 years¹⁰, it was no surprise that there is still no standard notation used among the teachers, as well as it is frowned upon to show what little notation there is to outsiders¹¹.

An example of both shamisen’s essential traditional techniques, as well as the ambiguity of notated shamisen pieces, is the 19 bar intro to the *jiuta* shamisen composition “Keshi no Hana” (けしの花) (composition date unknown) by Kikuoka Kengyō (1792-1847). What has not been observed in this direct number to western notation transcription (example 1) is the intentional space before the first note, the rhythmic condensing and expanding of each measure, and the differing sliding techniques depending on the musical phrase. A better reflection of the actual shamisen performance can be seen in example 2’s transcription.

While example 2’s transcription is more accurate, it is still not a perfect transcription of the shamisen performance. The exact difference in rhythms for faster and slower notes can’t be reflected in smaller or longer divisions of notes since the speed change isn’t proportionally divided. Furthermore, the difference in sound quality depending on if the pointer, middle or ring finger is used and pitches that are intentionally played slightly sharp or flat can’t be easily shown in standard western notation. Therefore, shamisen



Ex. 1: “Keshi no Hana” shamisen introduction transcribed by Colleen Schmuckal



Ex. 2 : “Keshi no Hana” shamisen actual performance transcribed by Colleen Schmuckal

teachers view most notations as a memory tool, not the means to transmit exactly how the music is actually performed.

To reinforce the essentials of shamisen's sound, beginner pieces are just pieces within the standard repertory for that shamisen genre. For example, *nagauta* shamisen starts with "Suehirogari" (末広がり) (1854) while *jiuta* shasmien uses "Kurokami" (黒髪) (1801). The goal is not for students to be able to perform these pieces perfectly, as that will take years of repeat performances before mastery. Instead, students learn the basics of shamisen's nuanced timing, technique, and sound system while gradually internalizing shamisen's repertory.

This teaching practice can also be observed in the Okinawan sanshin tradition. As Robert Garfias explained in his article on Okinawan *kunkunshi* notation, "The evening (of music lessons) consists of going through the *kunkunshi*, always beginning with at least the first three or four pieces in the book, that is, the *Guinhu* compositions: "Kajiadehu Bushi," "Unna Bushi," "Nakagusiku Hantame Bushi," and "Kuti Bushi." As the evening progresses the master begins jumping around to different compositions in the *kunkunshi* without ever stopping to "teach" one. Through this process, beginners are encouraged to play along, glancing at the notation and listening to and watching the master"¹².

The problem is, students today are no longer familiar with traditional shamisen music. Therefore, many new students have little patience to work through an unknown, rhythmically and melodically nuanced "beginner" piece that can easily be over ten minutes long. It is due to this problem that Kineya Seihō started to write new shamisen beginner music.

2. History of Kineya Seihō 杵屋正邦 (1914-96)

Hirohisa Yoshikawa (吉川博久), born in 1914, was the eldest son of a *geza* (kabuki backstage) musician. After entering the strict traditional world of *nagauta* shamisen in middle school, he received the performance name Kineya Seihō, starting his career as a *nagauta* shamisen performer. While performing, he also added new compositions to the standard *nagauta* repertory.

2-1. From Shamisen Performer to Composer

By 1948, Kineya Seihō became interested in Western compositions and started to study Western music, including Western musical theory, harmony, and counterpoint. Seihō's goal was to reform Japanese music through influences from western musical theory while keeping the base of this new music purely traditional. Henceforth, Seihō's expertise only as *the*

composer, not *performer*, was considered a first for the Japanese traditional music scene¹³.

By the end of his career, Seihō had written over 1,000 new compositions for Japanese instruments, including over 700 solos, duets, trios and quartets for shamisen. In 1958 and then in 1961, Seihō wrote 104 compositions he categorized as *Sangen (shamisen) Practice Pieces* (三絃練習曲). The goal of these practice pieces were to give beginners the tools to better understand “traditional” shamisen music. Notated in western five line staff, these shamisen practice pieces included singing and were relatively short, making the traditional style and structure a lot more palpable for new players. However, today most of these practice pieces are not commonly used in lessons for beginners. Instead, Seihō’s shamisen solos and duets (without singing), which have playing levels ranging from beginner to professional, have become more commonly used in lessons and for concerts, especially those affiliated with Sensoku Gakuen College of Music¹⁴.

2-2. Kineya Seihō’s NHK Activities

A notable point of Kineya Seihō’s career was his 40 years work as a permanent lecturer, conductor, and composer for the *Japan Broadcasting Corporation Hougaku-Ikuseikai*, a training program for Japanese traditional musicians organized by NHK. His goal was to cultivate the learning of Japanese music without the historical limitations created by different performing schools (*iemoto*), genres, and actual physical differences between instruments. This included composing new shamisen compositions that any shamisen player could perform. One of Seihō’s most outstanding students was Yamada School koto and shamisen professional Akiko Nishigata (1945~) who performed worldwide and commissioned new works for shamisen including “Suite for Sangen” (1996) by American composer Lou Harrison. Nishigata later founded the Research in Modern Japanese Music course at Sensoku Gakuen College of Music and advised performers majoring in modern Japanese music¹⁵.

To overcome barriers between shamisen genres, Seihō wrote his music primarily in western notation. With western notation, players are able to choose their own number notation system to write over the top of the western pitches. Furthermore, because rhythms are so clearly defined, there is no confusion over complicated timing practices or nuanced rhythms. At the end of each piece Seihō would also include a table of technique markings, both tradition and new, clearly explaining the desired performance method.

3. Notational Restrictions

3-1. Western vs. Number Notation

Kineya Seihō's innovated the use of western notation for shamisen. Traditionally, the tuning of the three strings on the shamisen isn't fixed. Instead, the shamisen's tuning is flexible, adjusting to instruments with a limited musical range like the singer or flute. Shamisen players also can purposely play certain pitches slightly sharp or flat, and change the actual tuning of the strings in the middle of a piece for a more expansive range of expression. Unlike western string instruments, there is no consistency in the tuning of the shamisen's strings or pitches making it difficult for performers to read western notation by sight only.

Therefore, Seihō's approach to western notation incorporates how shamisen players interpret number notation. Seihō's western notation sets the tuning of the open first string to B3, making the western notation's pitches line up naturally with the shamisen's favored half and full step neck positions without the need for excessive accidentals (example 3 and 4).

These neck positions tend to be favored not just because they are the common pitches used in Japanese traditional music, but also because they resonate effectively and with more accuracy than other positions on the instrument. Furthermore, this style of notation eliminates the need to need to define a key signature since traditionally shamisen has no sense of "key" outside of the changing of string's tunings and occasional accidental. As a result, Seihō's western notation is easy for shamisen players to both read and perform. Furthermore, after much practice and familiarity, some shamisen players are even able to sight read new music if written in this standardized style of western notation.

However, there are still limitations with Seihō's notation. Today, most shamisen players find tuning the lowest string to B3 causes their strings to feel loose, making it hard to play quick passages. In the case of shamisen solos or duets, the shamisen player(s) just change the tuning of the first string without rewriting the notation since they are generally reading their handwritten numbers over the notes, not the notation's pitches. However, when playing with other instruments whose tuning isn't as flexible the notation needs to clearly reflect the actual playing pitch. For example, in Seihō's duet for shamisen and shakuhachi "Meikyō" (明鏡), the shamisen's lowest string is written at D4, not B3, causing this notation to look dramatically different from Seihō's beginner pieces, as if the clef, normally in treble, had been changed to something new.

Many composers today want to standardize the method of writing western notation

Notation	<i>Bunka-fu</i>	<i>Tate-fu</i>	<i>Kenseikai-fu</i>										
Number Type	Tablature	Tablature	Do Re Mi										
Tuning	All Same	All Same	<i>sansagari</i> (DGC)			<i>honchoushi</i> (DGD)			<i>niagari</i> (DAD)				
String Number	All Same	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
Open String	0	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1st position	1	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2nd position	2	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3rd position	3	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
#	#	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
4th position	4	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
5th position	5	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
6th position	6	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
7th position	7	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8th position	8	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9th position	9	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
b	b	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10th position	10	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11th position	11	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
12th position	12	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13th position	13	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
#	1#	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
14th position	14	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
15th position	15	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
16th position	16	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
17th position	17	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
18th position	18	一	二	三	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Ex. 3 : shamisen playing positions and equivalent numbers per number notation

Ex. 4 : favored pitches in western notation

for shamisen, either by following Seihō's method of tuning to B3 or the more modern practice of tuning to D4. However, standardizing the tuning limits shamisen's tuning to either a B3 or D4, instead of following the traditional method of changing the tuning to any note depending on the overall mood of the piece. Writing in western notation, over number notations, does help shamisen players from all genres to easily perform together. However, it also forces shamisen players to play only one set of notes, eliminating the full range of tone colors and slightly off pitches that traditionally were essential for musical expression.

3-2. Technique Markings

Shamisen genres may share the same terminology or markings for different techniques, but the actual nuanced way these techniques are played can differ greatly. This can be attributed to each genre's different sizes of instruments, plectrums, bridges and theory of expression.

In the case of Seihō's compositions, whose goal was to cultivate a shamisen tradition not limited by historical boundaries, the musical techniques and playing style clearly have strong inspiration from *nagauta* shamisen. For example, Seihō generally marks the use of the third finger when fingering a 3rd position note from the 2nd position. 3rd position can use either the second or third finger, though the resulting pitch will differ slightly (example 3). It is more common for *nagauta* players to use the third finger while *jiuta* players use the second, causing a lot of *jiuta* players to be confused with the markings in Seihō's pieces.

Furthermore, when describing a slide, Seihō uses the *nagauta* terminology of *koki* (コキ) over the *jiuta* terminology of *suri* (スリ). Though both of these words mean to slide between two notes, the actual speed, timing, and overall expression of the slide is distinctly different: *koki* is a more straight, on the offbeat slide while *suri* is a slow to quick slide between two notes. Furthermore, the markings for *hajiki* and *sukui* are in *nagauta* style, which influences the student to play these techniques in straight hand/finger motion and time, instead of adding little nuances to either soften or harshen the sound often found in other genres of shamisen.

For example, on the notation for Seihō's *jiuta* shamisen duet "Hana Kazashi" (花簪), it clearly states that the rhythms should be played in *jiuta* style, slightly off the beat. However, "Hana Kazashi" uses the *nagauta* term *koki* for slides and *nagauta* markings for *sukui* (√) and *hajiki* (^) instead of the *jiuta* term *suri* for slides and *jiuta* markings for *sukui* (ス) and *hajiki* (^), making the expressive method of this piece confused. Consequently, *jiuta* players have transcribed this piece into *tate-fu*, rewriting all of the slides and techniques in *jiuta* style

Seihō's reliance on *nagauta* terminology and western performance markings and notation essentially forces performers to play in a more *nagauta/western* straight style, unintentionally limiting the vast playing and expressive methods shamisen developed historically.

4. "Shamisen" Rhythms

Standardization within Kineya Seihō's music isn't just limited to technique markings and pitches, but also in the interpretation of rhythms. Traditionally, all shamisen genres utilized the traditional timing practices of *ma* (間) and *nori* (ノリ) as not just rhythmic expressions that

speed up, slow down, or hold time still, but also as a means to create dynamic relationships between players while musically developing a piece. Because *nori* and *ma* are created through the interplay of multiple ensemble members, traditionally solo shamisen playing was used as an expressive technique to contrast *nori* and *ma*. Therefore, without these interactive rhythmic fluctuations, shamisen music is said to feel dull or flat; having no real musical direction¹⁶. However, *ma* and *nori* have been historically difficult to notate effectively in western notation and players have instead relied on ear training for transmission. Consequently, Seihō's beginner music features interlocking rhythms instead of *ma* and *nori*, highlighting the speed and complexity at which the shamisen can perform.

4-1. *Nori*

Nori is a performance technique used to both dictate fluctuating time (speeding up and slowing down) and create expression through the interplay between multiple performers. These fluctuating tempos can either rhythmically contrast each other in a sort of “call and response” like relationship, or the tempos can fluctuate simultaneously while speeding up or slowing down in a unison or very similar rhythmic pattern. Because the point of interest of *nori* is both *how* the rhythmic interplay is performed and *where* these rhythmic tempos changes occur, depending on the overall mood of the piece of music, it is common to observe generally less complex rhythmic lines; complexity comes from the musical interaction of performers pushing and pulling the time, not the rhythmic pattern itself. *Nori* is also a part of the overall rhythmic progression of a piece, making it an essential part of all shamisen music.

For example, the introduction to the *nagauta* beginner's composition “Gorō Tokimune” (五郎) has no steady beat and instead relies on *nori*, or the interplay between the solo shamisen and voice, to set the scene which calls Gorō's name¹⁷. The shamisen and voice have a sort of “call and response” musical relationship, with the shamisen speeding up and slowing down at moments of importance and the voice either mimicking the shamisen's playing or pulling the shamisen into a new series of pitches and overall musical time or rhythm (refer to example 7 on p. 50 for a transcription of this introduction).

The majority of Seihō's beginner compositions are duets. Duets are particularly useful for educational purposes because they allow for the student and teacher to practice facing each other, switching between first and second part, while the student learns to both lead and follow the rhythmic fluctuations. However, in Seihō's beginner pieces, even if *nori* like rhythms appear, it is rare to hear students perform these rhythmic fluctuations as *nori*.

However, during fieldwork conducted in Japan from 2009-2016, the expanding or shortening of time between beginner players was never observed. At time changes, players play a straight *ritardando* or a mathematical division of the time into larger parts, mimicking western musical practices instead of the shamisen tradition. To complicate matters further, the contrasting rhythms between players before and after tempo changes and “call and response” patterns interlock so complexly that even professional players are limited to playing these beginner pieces rhythmically straight to sound musically effective (example 6)¹⁹. This tendency to have *nori* like patterns intermixed with complexly interlocking rhythms can be observed in many of Seihō’s pieces, including “Miyabi” (1967) and “Hayase”(1979).

4-2. *Ma*

Ma is the principle Japanese theory of “time”: the expansion, decompression and overall existence of time. *Ma* is also the feeling of a note’s weight and continued existence, even when it can’t be physically heard. *Ma* is that space between notes, phrases, and performers; both as time, sound, and physically presents; that is equally as important in expressing music as the actual audible pitches. Without *ma*, it is said that shamisen can’t express music²⁰.

Looking back at example 2’s “Keshi no Hana”, the first fermata is representative of this theory of *ma*. The performers don’t start with the first sounding pitch but instead all members of the ensemble (koto, shamisen and shakuhachi) start with the suspension of silence before sounding the first note. This silence isn’t counted out, nor is it a waiting period for all members to get ready to play. It is instead an intentional holding of time to create tension and anticipation before the release of the first sounding pitch. Even in the opening shamisen line for Gorō intentionally holds the middle note of the first phrase before releasing.

While Seihō’s music includes many moments of rests or silence, shamisen professionals have complained that Seihō’s beginner’s music lacks *ma*²¹. This is partly due to the scarcity of “pure” silence or rests within the music needed to give notes room to breathe, as well as the notation dictating that the rhythmic *time* needs to continue forward without fluctuating. Furthermore, fermata or stress marks are rarely placed over important moments of *rest* or *suspension*, causing players to count rests strictly in time (refer to example 5 mm. 62-65).

Analyzing Seihō’s entire collection of duets, including those written for advance level shamisen players, reveals that shamisen’s rhythmic interest within Seihō’s compositions comes from the increasing difficulty of interlocking rhythms and contrasting time changes. Seihō’s music focuses on the speed and complexity at which the shamisen can perform instead of the nuanced pushing and pulling of time felt when utilizing *ma* and *nori*. While

Seihō's rhythmic patterns take inspirations from *ma* and *nori*, the divisions of rhythms are so complicated that it is almost impossible to fluctuate the time spent on each individual note. Seihō's most notorious example of this is the composition "Kooou" (呼応) where the second shamisen player plays exclusively on the offbeats of the first player's rhythms.

Therefore, while Seihō's rhythms are clear enough to learn without the aid of a teacher due to being written clearly in western staff notation, focusing only on complex rhythms and interlocking patterns, while exciting and something shamisen can effectively perform, limits shamisen's rhythmic range of expression to only standard western musical rhythmic patterns.

Conclusion

Kineya Seihō's mission was to come up with an educational system that could be taught to all shamisen players, breaking down the barriers that had been crippling and limiting shamisen within the modern musical scene²². Seihō did this through creating a notation system that utilized shamisen playing methods and musical interpretation, as well as using idioms and playing patterns found commonly throughout shamisen traditional music. Furthermore, Seihō modernized shamisen by finding western musical elements that could be expressed effectively; including complexly interlocking rhythms and harmonic colorations of Japanese musical phrases. Seihō published and distributed a large number of new shamisen compositions, especially for beginners, that varied in style, difficulty, and modernized techniques this filled in the gap between the traditional and modern musical scene. This also re-invigorated shamisen music, giving it a new perspective within modern music.

However, shamisen is a multi-genre instrument with differing means of expressing music depending on the genre. Because Seihō only focused on one genre's, *nagauta* shamisen, performing and expression methods as the standard for his music, his beginner compositions created new limitations for shamisen playing. Furthermore, Seihō's compositions utilize those *nagauta* musical elements that are more easily written in western notation and work well with a western playing style. Consequently, there are still *shamisen* specialized performance methods, rhythms, and developmental techniques yet to be utilized in modern music for beginners. Seihō's compositions leave out the core elements that tie all shamisen genres together: expressing music through "unseen theory" or nuanced time and contrasting tone colors and pitches. As a result, Seihō's compositions are not recognized as a part of shamisen's standard repertory; unlike other contemporary composers' compositions like Michio Miyagi and Kin'ichi Nakanoshima²³. The only

shamisen schools that regularly play Seihō's music are those who were taught by Seihō himself.

Seihō's beginner music as a modern tool to learn western music on shamisen is both brilliant and useful even today, as Seihō has one of the largest outputs of new, inventive shamisen compositions. However, as a means to educate the essence of what makes shamisen and its inherited musical theory unique and create new possibilities for the modern musical scene, Seihō's compositions leaves a lot to be desired.

New beginner music is essential for the continued expansion and modern relevance for any instrument. The goal for future beginner music for any traditional instrument, especially for multi-genre instruments, should focus on the essential elements that define that instrument's musical base and theory. Furthermore, more creativity and freedom with the notation of rhythms, pitches and sounds will more effectively express the musical theory of non-western instruments, making even the most nuanced "unseen theory" become recognizable and teachable for future generations, as well as expanding the possibilities for modern western musical notation and modern music as a whole.

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- 2 田中悠美子、野川美穂子、配川美加編『まるごと三味線の本』青弓社、2009年、232頁。
- 3 Nakajima, Hisako (2012, September 17th - December 24th) Personal Interview.
- 4 Shouhei Tanaka studied music while studying abroad in Germany, later returning to Japan in 1899. He was famous for the invention of the just intonation organ as well as notating traditional shamisen pieces into western notation.
- 5 Minoru Miki finished his western notation orchestration book for Japanese instruments in 1996. It has been presently also translated into English (2008) and Chinese (2008).
- 6 田中悠美子、野川美穂子、配川美加編『まるごと三味線の本』青弓社、2009年、234頁。
- 7 田中悠美子、野川美穂子、配川美加編『まるごと三味線の本』青弓社、2009年、5頁。
- 8 “*Fu*” is the Japanese work for “notation”.
- 9 「譜をみることは、すなわち目で弾いていることと同じである。三味線は、やはり耳で弾くものである。それがそのまま、音楽なのだ。際限なく耳を通して訓練することによって、技は無限に磨かれる。」
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Gorō Tokimune

Kineya Rokuzaemon X

Voice
 Sanshin

ぎ る ほ ど に
 12 そ が の ご ろ う
 23 と き む ね
 30 コキ
 38 は

slow *faster* *slow* *faster* *accel.*
slow *accel.*
slow *accel.* *slow*
accel. *slow*

Ex.7: Introduction from “Gorō Tokimune”²⁴ (1841) transcribed by Colleen Schmuckal

マルチジャンル楽器の伝承方法としての初心者向け楽曲

－ 杵屋正邦の初心者向け三味線楽曲の分析を中心に －

シュムコー、コリーン・クリスティナ

本論文は杵屋正邦（1914年～1996年）が作曲した初心者向け楽曲を分析する。西洋的記譜法を通して三味線という本来「マルチジャンル」である楽器の標準化が進められたことを指摘し、それがこの楽器の伝統、歴史、そして現代音楽における位置づけとどのような関係があるのかを考察する。更に、本論文は徳丸吉彦の「見えない理論」（「音楽とはなにかー理論と現場の間から」、2008）を初心者に効果的に伝える方法を分析し、これを明らかにすることを目的としている。

杵屋正邦は、楽器の種類や流派を越えて合奏できる演奏家を育成することを目的に、各ジャンルの三味線の技法や奏法に加え、西洋音楽のリズムやスタイルを取り入れ、三味線の伝統的な記号を含む五線譜で三味線のための曲を700曲以上作曲した。そのうち、104曲は「三絃練習曲」で、短く、歌の付いた初心者向けの楽曲となっている。しかし、現在の三味線の稽古の場では、古典の代表的な曲で三味線を始める初心者が大半を占めるなか、曲の難度などを理由に、早い段階で三味線の習得を諦めてしまう生徒が多いという事情が存在しているにも関わらず、正邦の手掛けた初心者向けの作品はほとんど使用されていない。これには、多くの三味線演奏者にとって、正邦の作品は古典の奏法を用いながらも、その他の部分が伝統から離れ過ぎていると批判されることが理由の一つとなっていると考えられる。実際、正邦は最も多くの三味線の曲を作り、それは現在も演奏こそされているものの、作品自体は箏曲における宮城作品のようなスタンダードにはなっていない。

本論文では、その理由を理解するため、正邦の作品と各ジャンルで入門編として使われている曲を比較し、分析する。その結果を踏まえ、初心者向けの楽曲で三味線の本来的な表現方法がいかに効果的に具現化できるかを考察する。