

YEARNING FOR THE BELL: A STUDY OF TRANSMISSION IN THE SHAKUHACHI HONKYOKU TRADITION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis looks at past and present processes of transmission within the tradition of the *shakuhachi honkyoku* (尺八本曲, *shakuhachi* ‘original pieces’). The *shakuhachi*, an end-blown bamboo flute, has existed in Japan since the eighth century. Since at least the fifteenth century, it has been used as a tool for spirituality, and has been particularly associated with Zen Buddhism. The *honkyoku* were composed, performed and transmitted within that spiritual context, especially during the Edo period (1600-1868) by mendicant priests called *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priests of nothingness’). An understanding of the nature of the *honkyoku* was expressed in such concepts as *honnin no kyoku* (本人の曲, ‘one’s own piece’), *zettai no ma* (絶対の間, ‘absolute timing’), *tettei on* (徹底音) and *ichi on jôbutsu* (一音成仏, ‘one sound becoming Buddhahood’).

A piece-specific genealogy chart for the *honkyoku* “*Reibo*” (鈴慕) of the *Ôshû* lineage (奥州系) is presented, which relies upon written and anecdotal material to trace two main lines of transmission. These lines transmit *honkyoku* which have become known as “*Futaiken reibo*” (布袋軒鈴慕, “*Reibo*” of the Futai temple’) and “*Shôganken reibo*” (松巖軒鈴慕, “*Reibo*” of the Shôgan temple’). A comparative analysis of transcriptions of ten performances of these “*Reibo*” pieces by six *shakuhachi* players representing these two lines of transmission shows a high degree of variability and a number of patterns of similarities and differences. These patterns demonstrate the oral nature of the transmission, and allude to the process-oriented “essence” of the *honkyoku* tradition.

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This UMI edition is a corrected version of the original manuscript successfully submitted to the University of Sydney in 1993. No substantial changes have been made. Many of the typographical, spelling and grammatical errors have been removed. Likewise, numerous unclear passages have been rewritten. The majority of these corrections were suggestions made by Tom Deaver (Nagano, Japan), Prof. Yamaguti (University of Osaka) and Prof. Trimillos (University of Hawai'i). In particular, Tom Deaver, with his nearly three decades of experience in the *shakuhachi* tradition in Japan, greatly contributed to this more readable edition of the thesis.

Blue Mountains, NSW 1992

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This thesis was originally written on an obsolete NEC Japanese word processor using a now-defunct software program. The original files were prepared for my website by James Jennings, after I had been told by a number of professional data retrieval companies that the floppy discs on which the original files resided were impossible to read and the data lost.

This present hard-copy version is a meticulous revision of the James' website version. The thesis was reformatted from html code into a text-based document, a task I thought impossibly tedious. It also contains many corrections, too numerous to list. This version exists because of Gary Dempsey's initial prompting and labourious proofreading of the entire thesis a number of times.

Thank you James and Gary, for doing the impossible!

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
















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Table 1. Combinations of fingerings and meri/kari techniques to produce the pitch g'

Fingert holes 		
Backhole 		
4 		
3 		
2 		
1 		
"u" (<u>Kari</u>)	"Chi-meri"	"E-dai meri" (great <u>meri</u>)













	
	
	
	
	
	
"Ru-meri"	"Ru-meri" 3 hole only open (used only in lower octave)

Table 2 Comparison of formal divisions in the
"Reibo" family of pieces

Title of "Reibo" (Name transmitting it)	Names of Formal Divisions as per Traditional Scores					(English translation)	
	Take Shirabe (Bamboo searching)	Honte (Main pattern)	Takane (High sound)	Takane gaeshi (High sound returning)	Hachigaeshi (Returning the Bowl)	Hachigaeshi (Returning the Bowl)	Musubi (wrap up)
"Shōgan ken reibo" (Yokogawa, Jin, Sakai)	Take Shirabe (Bamboo searching)	Honte (main pattern)	—	Takane (High sound)	Takane (High sound)	Musubi (wrap up)	Musubi (wrap up)
"Futaiken reibo" (Jin, Sakai)	Take Shirabe (Bamboo searching)	—	ichi no takane (High sound #1)	Ni no takane (High sound #2)	San no takane (High sound #3)	—	—
"Futaiken reibo" (Goto Tōsui)	Take Shirabe (Bamboo searching)	Taki otoshi (Falling waterfall)	Takane (High sound)	—	Hachigaeshi (Returning the Bowl)	Tsuyu kiri (Dew cutting)	—
"Miyagi no reibo" (Kobayashi Shizen)	Take Shirabe (Bamboo searching)	Taki otoshi (Falling waterfall)	Takane (High sound)	—	Hachigaeshi (Returning the Bowl)	—	—
"Futaiken reibo" (Uramoto Setchō)	Take Shirabe (Bamboo searching)	Taki otoshi (Falling waterfall)	ichi no takane (High sound #1)	Ni no takane (High sound #2)	Hachigaeshi (Returning the Bowl)	—	—
"Kinjōji reibo" (Ondara gaekishi)	Take Shirabe (Bamboo searching)	Reibo [Honte] (Yearning for the Bell)	Takane (High sound)	Honkyoku (main piece)	Hachigaeshi (Returning the Bowl)	—	—
"Bōno reibo" (?)	—	unnamed	Takane (High sound)	Takane (2) (High sound (2))	unnamed	—	—
"Miyagi no Reibo" (Ondara gaekishi)	Shirabe (Searching)	Reibo (Yearning for the Bell)	Honkyoku gaeshi (main piece repeat)	—	Hachigaeshi (Returning the Bowl)	—	—

Table 3 Formal divisions of "Futaiken reibo"
and "Shōganken reibo"

"Futaiken Reibo" group	<u>Take Shirabe</u> (Bamboo Seeding)	<u>Houte</u> (Main Pattern)	(<u>Houte</u>)	<u>Takane</u> (High Sound)	<u>Hochigaeshi</u> (Returning the Bowl)	<u>Musubi</u> (Wrap-up)
"Shōganken Reibo" group	<u>Take Shirabe</u> (Bamboo Seeding)	<u>Houte</u> (Main Pattern)	<u>Takane</u> (High Sound)	<u>Takane gaeshi</u> (High sound Return)	<u>Hochigaeshi</u> (Returning the Bowl)	<u>Musubi</u> (Wrap-up)

Table 4 Reibo no te locations within the formal divisions

Performer	SECTION	Take shirabe	Honte	(Honte)	Takane	Hachigaeshi	Musubi	"Futaiken Reibo" group
Uramoto Watazumi Yokoyama			(x)	x	x		x	
			x	x	x		x	
			x	x	x		x	
Jin Sakai			(x)	x	x		x	
			(x)	x	x			
Performer	SECTION	Take shirabe	Honte	Takane	Takane gaeshi	Hachigaeshi	Musubi	"Shōganken Reibo" group
Watazumi Yokoyama Iwamoto			x	x	x x x	x		
			x	x	x	x		
			x	x	x	x		
Jin Sakai			x	x	x x (x)	x		
			x	x	x x x	x		

x = occurrences of reibo no te

(x) = occurrences of vestiges of reibo no te

Table 5 Three methods of performing the note g
in reibo no te

Method A

(Fingerholes)
Back ●
4 ●
3 ○
2 ●
1 ○

using meri technique

Method B

●
●
○ or ○
○ (shading of ③ hole
is optional)
○

using meri technique
(more meri than with
method A)

Method C

●
●
●
○
○

using kari technique

Table 6 Musical events found in phrases F:08-9

	c	d	P	2nd pitch	g	P	g	P	a ^b	c	d	P	g	P	a ^b	P	a ^b	P	c
u	x				x							x	x						
w	x		x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x		x	
y	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x		x	
j	x	x					x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x		x	
s	x	x					x	x											x

"Furillen rebo"
group

w	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x							x			
y	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x							x		x	
i	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x							x		x	
j	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x							x		x	
s	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x							x		x	

"Stiggen rebo"
group

P. = beginning of new phrase
c, d, a^b, etc. = pitches of sustained notes

Table 6 Musical events found in phrases F:08-9

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about the transmission processes that have occurred in the past and are continuing to occur today in the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition. The tradition is centered largely in Japan, but since the 1960s and especially from the 1980s an ever-increasing number of performers and performances can be found outside Japan (Kamisanô 1974:22; Lee 1976:97, 1986:11-12). The *shakuhachi* (尺八) is an end-blown bamboo flute that first entered Japan as one of the instruments of the court ensemble (*gagaku*, 雅楽) imported from China in the middle of the seventh century (Kurihara 1918:32-35; Kamisanô 1974:10; Ueno 1984:8-9; *Hôgaku Hyakka Jiten* (Kikkawa, ed.) [hereafter HHJ] 1984:491-493; Tukitani 1988:39-40; *Nihon Ongaku Daijiten* (Hirano, et al., ed.) [hereafter NOD] 1989:329, 500). It evolved over the centuries to become distinct both from its form at the time of importation and from all end-blown flutes anywhere in the world (Tukitani et al., 1991:1-2; HHJ 1984:491; NOD 1989:329). Though no instrument or genre of traditional Japanese music, or *hōgaku* (邦楽), can compete in popularity in modern day Japan with western-derived musics such as rock, pop, jazz and classical music, the *shakuhachi* is nonetheless one of Japan's most popular *hōgaku* instruments.

In this thesis, the term *honkyoku* (本曲), which literally means “main” or “original piece” refers only to the repertoire of mostly solo *shakuhachi* pieces (Tukitani 1990a:3) which, from as early as the fifteenth century, were anonymously composed and aurally transmitted, within the context of Zen Buddhism, as a religious practice (Kamisanô 1974:10-12). These *honkyoku* were played by monks known as *komusō* (虚無僧), who were most active during the Edo period (1600-1868) (Kurihara:1918:90; Ueno 1984:205). *Honkyoku* are the oldest pieces and are generally the most venerated of all the genres of music in the *shakuhachi* tradition.

Honkyoku is only one of many genres of *shakuhachi* music. The term *koten honkyoku* (古典本曲, classical *honkyoku*), coined by Tukitani in the 1970s, is most frequently used in Japan today to differentiate this genre from others of the *shakuhachi* tradition (Tukitani 1990a:32). In particular, *koten honkyoku* are distinct from those solo pieces (also called *honkyoku*) which, since the late 19th century, have been composed by named persons. These composers were frequently heads (*iemoto* 家元) of secular sect-like organizations or schools (*ryū* 流), who may have used the term *honkyoku* to elevate the status of their compositions in the eyes of their members. By far the largest of all *shakuhachi* schools in Japan today, in terms of membership, is the Tozan *ryū* (都山流) (NOD 1989:501). It is ironic that no *koten honkyoku* are transmitted within Tozan *ryū*. The only *honkyoku* in its repertoire are the above mentioned modern pieces, composed by the founder of the school, Nakao Tozan (中尾都山, 1876-1956).

In general, little has been written about the transmission of *shakuhachi honkyoku* or any other genre of *shakuhachi* music. Studies of the *shakuhachi* and its repertoire typically focus upon four areas: the development and uses of the instrument over time, with discussions of prototypes and related instruments; its use by the *komusō* of

the Edo period; the development of the various *ryû* in the 19th century and later; and finally, an examination of the professionalism of the latter 20th century (Kamisangô 1974; Malm 1959:151-164; Ueno 1984). The repertoire available to the modern day *shakuhachi* player, including *honkyoku*, is usually described as it exists in a single instance in time, with little or no reference to the historical development of the pieces; exceptions are the recent articles by Tukitani (1990, 1990a 1991). Such descriptions give a particularly distorted impression of *honkyoku*. As will be shown in this thesis, one of the most noticeable characteristics of many *honkyoku* is their high degree of variability and change, due in part to the way in which they have been and are transmitted.

Apart from superficial surveys of the *shakuhachi* tradition, such as are found in reference works devoted to all areas of *hōgaku* or Japan's traditional music (Kishibe 1984:78-80; HHJ 1984:491-493; NOD 1989:500-506), the majority of the literature on the *shakuhachi* is *ryû* specific. Notable exceptions are Ueno's book *Shakuhachi no rekishi* (尺八の歴史 1984) and much of the writings of Tukitani and Kamisangô, all of which are written in Japanese. (See Chapter 2, Survey of the Literature, for a discussion of these writings.) One reason these scholars are able to write about the *shakuhachi* without being *ryû* specific is because they do not play the *shakuhachi* and consequently are not affiliated with any *ryû*. In contrast to the above-mentioned non-performing scholars, the author of this thesis is a performer of the *shakuhachi*.

Unlike most of the *ryû* specific material written by other *shakuhachi* performers, this thesis attempts, as far as possible, to transcend the boundaries of the *ryû* and treat the *shakuhachi* tradition as a whole. Furthermore, it does not view the *honkyoku* repertoire as static, as having been handed down unchanged since time immemorial, but instead it focuses on the numerous ways in which pieces are constantly changing and how they have been transmitted from individual to individual over many generations.

In this thesis an initial understanding of the processes of transmitting the many *honkyoku* from individual to individual and from generation to generation will be sought through a detailed description of what has occurred in the transmission of a single piece, tracing the transmission through however many *ryû* and individuals as may arise. The piece chosen as a case study for this thesis is the *honkyoku* “*Reibo*” (鈴慕), which, like most *honkyoku*, has been largely transmitted orally.

The reasons for choosing “*Reibo*” as the focal point of the thesis are many and will be discussed in full in Chapter 4. Suffice it to say here that today there is not just one definitive “*Reibo*” piece, but a great number of “*Reibo*” pieces, all related to each other to a greater or lesser degree, and all equally definitive. The actual meaning of “*Reibo*” must therefore be defined. By this is meant not only the definitions and possible significance of the Chinese characters which make up the title (鈴慕, literally ‘Bell Yearning’), but also the musical definition of “*Reibo*”. What precisely is being referred to when we use the word “*Reibo*”? What constitutes the piece? How many of its sounds or sequences of sounds can be changed or omitted before the piece is no longer thought of as “*Reibo*”? Can patterns be detected which might explain the many musical variations and different titles? These and other questions must be addressed, especially in the context of performance.

Because of the oral nature of the transmission, the context of performance is particularly important in a study of the *honkyoku* “*Reibo*”. For example, there are cases of pieces with musical characteristics that are clearly identical to those of “*Reibo*” but which are called something else, for example “*Fûrin*” (風林, ‘Wind-woods’). The question of musical identity arises in other oral traditions as well, for example in American folk tunes (Seeger 1977). The number and diversity of “*Reibo*” pieces that exist today are the result of, and clearly reflect, the manner in which the piece has been transmitted from generation to generation. Therefore, a comparison of different versions of the piece should reflect the nature of the transmission, indicating extent and degree of change as well as stability during the process of transmission.

In order to understand the processes of transmission within the *shakuhachi* tradition, the ontology of transmission itself must be discussed; for example, questions such as the following must be asked: What, precisely, is transmitted? Is the nature of the transmission of *honkyoku* perceived differently by different teachers and students? How does the transmission from teacher to student, from individual to individual and from lineage to lineage compare? What can be learned of the transmission of “*Reibo*” by looking at the processes of performing the piece as opposed to studying notated scores of the piece? These questions are taken up more fully in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

It is also important to examine the relationship between the author of this study, the object of this study (the processes of transmission in the *shakuhachi* tradition) and the study itself. This study is both subject and object, itself a part of the process of transmitting the *shakuhachi* tradition both in and outside of Japan, as well as a study of that process. The boundaries between the observer, the observation and the observed; and between the transmitter, the receiver and that which is being received are not at all distinct. In writing this thesis, I am both the observer and, as a member of the *shakuhachi* tradition, part of what is being observed. In writing the previous sentence, I am observing myself observing what I am observing about a tradition of which I am a part.

Though everyone who is a member of any tradition is also to a large degree a highly motivated observer of that tradition, my status as “observer” has been legitimized, at least in the world of Western academia, by having received a Bachelor of Arts degree in music and a Master of Arts degree in ethnomusicology, both from the University of Hawaii. The topic of my MA thesis was the performance practices of the Chikuho ryû (Lee 1986), for the most part a very *ryû*-specific study.

I am also very much a part of what is being observed, the tradition as well as the transmission processes of that tradition; I began learning to play the instrument in Japan in 1970 and continued learning there for seven years. In 1980, I became the first non-Japanese in any lineage or school of the *shakuhachi* tradition to receive the rank of *dai shihan* (大師範, grand master), as a member of the Chikuho ryû (竹保流) under the tutelage of Sakai Chikuho II (二代目酒井竹保, 1933-1992). I have been performing the *shakuhachi* professionally as my primary source of income for twenty years. From 1973 until leaving Japan in 1977, I performed the *shakuhachi* on stage as the only non-Japanese member of the internationally acclaimed Japanese drum and folk music group, “OndeKOZA” (now called Kodô).

I taught *shakuhachi* through the University of Hawaii Music Department and privately in Honolulu from 1979 until 1986. During this time, I founded a still active *shakuhachi* club within the community. Since coming to Australia in 1986, to begin postgraduate doctoral studies at the University of Sydney, I have continued teaching, performing and recording. (My recordings are distributed worldwide on the USA labels, Smithsonian Folkways, Lyricord and Narada, and most recently on the Australian labels, Tall Poppies and New World Productions). I am Australia's only professional *shakuhachi* player. Permanent residence was granted to me by the Australian Government in 1989 on the strength of my *shakuhachi* activities. I am still receiving *shakuhachi* instruction whenever possible, having studied periodically with Yokoyama Katsuya (横山勝也, b.1935) since 1985. However one defines an "insider" to a tradition (my definition is found in Chapter 1), there is a strong case for my being considered "inside" the *shakuhachi* tradition, and thus part of the object of this study.

The separation between subject and object has been, until relatively recently, one of the main tenets of Western scientific thought. It is a major assumption behind many of the various definitions of "positivism", of which Halfpenny lists twelve. Examples of these definitions are: "Positivism is a theory of knowledge according to which the only kind of sound knowledge available to humankind is that of science grounded in observation"; and "Positivism is a theory of history in which the motor of progress that guarantees the emergence of superior forms of society is competition between increasingly differentiated individuals" (Halfpenny 1982:114-115). Assumptions such as these most likely remain deeply ingrained in the thought habits of most Westerners (particularly scholars and academics) today, despite the anti-positivistic moves which have occurred in many academic disciplines over the last decade. In acknowledging that such a separation would be totally inappropriate to the present study (see next paragraph), that it would eat at the intellectual honesty which lies at the heart of the scholarly discipline, I realize that I am in danger of being perceived by some as somehow flaunting the rules of academic discourse.

Upon entering the world of the *shakuhachi*, at least some of its more traditional realms, one senses that the distinction between subject and object is not only questioned, but negated. As stated above (see p.1), for at least the two centuries leading up to the latter 19th century, *honkyoku*, the oldest and most venerated of all of the genres of *shakuhachi* music, were played almost exclusively by mendicant priests, who belonged to the Fuke-shû (普化宗), a sub-sect of Zen Buddhism. Even today, though the instrument is largely secularized, many *shakuhachi* players perform *honkyoku* not as an act of making music but as an act of *suizen* (吹禅, 'blowing Zen'), a practice which has probably existed since well before the sixteenth century (Blasdel 1984:216; Kamisangô 1974:10-11; Ueno 1984:159-162). In one sense, when playing *honkyoku* one does not differentiate between the performer, the performee (the instrument), the performed (the piece) and the performance (the music). Just as in the more orthodox *zazen* (座禅; 'seated meditation') of Zen Buddhism, there is no real differentiation between the act of meditation, the one who is meditating, and that which is being meditated.

A blurring of boundaries between the transmitter and the receiver can also be seen in the *shakuhachi* tradition itself. Many of the changes that have been and are still being experienced in the *shakuhachi* tradition in Japan are due to strong influences, both

past and present, from the West. For example, the extensive use of staff notation by *shakuhachi* players, the concept of performances in concert halls and the tape recorder and other mechanical recording devices have all effected much change on the tradition. These changes, having become a part of the *shakuhachi* tradition, are now being transmitted to the West. At the same time there are also examples of features of the modern day *shakuhachi* tradition which have accelerated its transmission to the West. Further discussion of this subject can be found in Chapter 5.

It should be no surprise to anyone familiar with Japanese philosophy, either the Chinese import of Taoism ([道教] Japanese: Dôkyô) or Zen Buddhism, that a study of the “Zen music” of the *shakuhachi* seems to affirm the theories of anti-positivism. In his discussion of Derrida’s concept of *differance*, Leitch (1983:42) could have well been quoting the central Chinese figure of Taoism, Lao Tsu ([老子] Japanese: Rôshi): “it has neither existence nor essence. It belongs to no category of being, present or absent”; “there is no name for this, not even essence or Being...”; “*Differance* is neither a *word* nor a *concept*”. One cannot help thinking that Lao Tsu as well as many of the Zen Buddhist masters in some ways might have embraced the same spirit as that of the anti-positivists or deconstructive critics. More will be said on this subject in Chapter 5.

In addition to the esoteric non-differentiation of subject and object, the *honkyoku* tradition shares with its wellspring of inspiration, Zen Buddhism, the importance placed upon direct transmission from one person to another without reliance upon writing, i.e., scriptures or notations. The subject of orality must be dealt with in depth, as the transmission of *shakuhachi honkyoku* is primarily an oral one even today, at least one hundred and fifty years after notation began to be used (Lee 1986:127; 1991:19). The *honkyoku* tradition exhibits characteristics common to all oral traditions, such as formulaic repetition of embellishments, phrases and parts of phrases. Much has been written on orality in recent years, both in regard to the spoken word (Parry, Lord, Ong, Butler, etc.) and, specifically, to music (Treitler, *The Oral and literate in music*, etc.). Theories of orality provide a framework with which to examine *honkyoku*. They shed light on the formulaic construction of *honkyoku*.

Orality is a state of being which, according to Ong (1982:15), can be thought of as “pristine human consciousness that was not literate”. Theories of orality enable us, at least partially, to comprehend if not fully reconstruct that consciousness. The idea of “pristine human consciousness” is central to Zen Buddhism; the latter is one way of experiencing the former. Likewise, *honkyoku*, when performed as *suizen*, are manifestations of “pristine human consciousness”. As with Zen Buddhism, they are fundamentally oral and experiential in their transmission and context. Thus, the subjects of transmission, orality and Zen Buddhism converge in the study of *shakuhachi honkyoku*.

Though this thesis deals mainly with the processes of transmission of the *honkyoku* as found in Japan, these processes are also occurring outside Japan, where the *shakuhachi* is one of the most well-known among traditional Japanese musical instruments. The popularity of *shakuhachi* among non-Japanese is attested to by the fact that almost every major *shakuhachi* performer/teacher in Japan is teaching or has taught non-Japanese students. A primary example of this can be found in Kyoto, which is not only the heart of traditional Japan, but is also the location of Meianji

(明暗寺), one of the main temples of the *komusô* during the Edo period and the center of the post-Edo *honkyoku* movement which has survived to this day. For at least the past ten years, Kurahashi Yoshio (倉橋義雄, b.1949), a noted teacher based in Kyoto and representing a conservative *shakuhachi* lineage, has taught substantially more non-Japanese students than Japanese students.

There are today a number of active *shakuhachi* teachers who reside permanently in Europe, North and South America and Australia. These teachers are passing their knowledge of the instrument and its tradition directly to their students and, through performances and recordings, to a wide non-participatory audience as well. There is an “International Shakuhachi Society” based in England with governors living on three continents. The “International Shakuhachi Training Center” in rural Japan caters, to a large extent, to non-Japanese. Recently one of Japan’s largest music publishing houses has published in English a “manual for learning” the *shakuhachi*. It is written largely for prospective students of the instrument who have no access to a teacher (Blasdel 1988).

In light of the above, and other examples too numerous to list, it is obvious that the *shakuhachi* and its music is in the process of being rapidly transmitted to the West. As with every cross-cultural transmission changes inevitably occur. This is not to imply that the *shakuhachi* tradition as it exists in Japan is itself static.

As one of the above-mentioned teacher/performers of the *shakuhachi* living outside of Japan, who has been actively participating in the transmission process for twenty years, it is my hope that this thesis will not only add to the corpus of knowledge on the *shakuhachi* in general and to theories of transmission, but will also contribute in at least two ways to the ongoing process of transmitting the tradition to the West. Firstly, merely by writing in English, knowledge of the *shakuhachi* tradition, which may be common among literate Japanese *shakuhachi* enthusiasts but otherwise little known, becomes more accessible to the West. Secondly, by examining the processes of transmission as it has occurred and is continuing to occur in the *shakuhachi* tradition in Japan, it becomes possible to begin to understand causes and effects in its transmission to the West, their likely origins and their future developments.

The following is a chapter by chapter summary of the thesis:

Chapter 1 discusses the paradigm of insider/outsider, addressing the problematics involved in utilizing such a paradigm. It also defines the concepts “insider” and “outsider” as they relate to the *shakuhachi* tradition.

Chapter 2 surveys and groups the literature on the *shakuhachi* which has been written in Japanese, English and other languages, within categories determined by their authors and readership in terms of the insider/outsider paradigm. Particular attention is focussed on the treatment of transmission in the various sources. This chapter also surveys ethnomusicological literature which presents common models of transmission in the *honkyoku* tradition.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the history of the *shakuhachi honkyoku*. In contrast to many of the published histories of the *shakuhachi*, eg., *Die shakuhachi der Kinko-Schule* (Gutzwiller 1983), the *honkyoku* is viewed as transmitted within a single tradition,

rather than through a number of related but quite separate traditions. Within that single tradition are a number of diverse transmission lines, ranging from single individuals to large organizations such as the *ryū*.

Chapter 4 presents a history of the piece “*Reibo*”, giving as much detail as the available evidence will allow. Included in this chapter is a piece-specific genealogy chart of *shakuhachi* players who have featured in the “*Reibo*” transmission process from the turn of the 20th century.

Chapter 5 looks at the transmission of *shakuhachi honkyoku* from three perspectives: what is being transmitted; how the transmission occurs; and the ways that what is being transmitted and how the transmission occurs affect each other. The “what” of the transmission is addressed with discussions on the ontology of transmission, and on the dialectical relationships between subjectivity and objectivity and between interior and exterior. Theories of orality and how they relate to *honkyoku* are explored. The relationships between documents and performance are also discussed. The “how” of the transmission is examined through the formal elements of transmission: lineage, lesson, notation and performance. The element of performance includes timber, pitch, and rhythm. By examining the ideologies of a number of major figures in the tradition with regards to the transmission of the *honkyoku*, the final part of this chapter demonstrates some of the ways in which the “what” and the “how” interact.

Chapter 6 discusses issues surrounding transcriptions and analyses of classical *honkyoku* and makes note of analyses found in the literature which are pertinent to the topic of this thesis. The methods of the transcriptions and the analyses adopted in this thesis are explained. Transcriptions are analyzed of ten performances, by players listed in the genealogy chart in Chapter 4, of two versions or groups of the piece “*Reibo*”. References are made to issues raised elsewhere in the thesis, particularly those discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Finally, Chapter 7 presents conclusions that can be made from this study. It points out what can and cannot be shown by the scholarly approach of this thesis and why.

The subject, object, and the objective of this thesis, then, is transmission, specifically the transmission of *honkyoku*, in particular the piece “*Reibo*”, one of the “original pieces” of the *shakuhachi*, Japan’s classical bamboo flute.

It should be noted that unless otherwise specified, in discussions of fingerings and pitch, the pitches produced by the standard length instrument (1.8 *shaku*) will be used. The pitch produced by fingering “all holes closed” is d-natural above middle c. Also, throughout the thesis, proper names will be written in the standard order in which they occur in their culture; Japanese family names are written before given names. Finally, there are a number of romanization systems in use in Japan. For proper names, the romanization favoured by the person, organization, etc., is adopted wherever known (eg., “*Syakuhati kenkyū kai*” instead of “*Shakuhachi kenkyū kai*” and “*Tukitani*” instead of “*Tsukitani*”). In all other cases, the Hepburn system is used.

CHAPTER 1

THE INSIDER/OUTSIDER PARADIGM

1.1 Concepts and Problems with Insider/Outsider Paradigms

The dichotomy of the insider and the outsider is germane to the present study because of the importance given it by the members of the *shakuhachi* tradition (see below p.15). Concepts of insider and outsider have also influenced how that tradition has been and is being transmitted, in ways that will be described below. Consequently, a description of the *shakuhachi* tradition might best begin with a discussion of the concept of insider/outsider.

The usefulness of the distinctions of insider and outsider in a description of the tradition of the *shakuhachi* depends in part on the extent to which one can clearly define “being a member of the *shakuhachi* tradition” and “not being a member of the *shakuhachi* tradition”, that is, how clearly one can define ‘insider’ and the ‘outsider’ in this context. Even though differentiations between ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ in the ethnographic literature have in many cases been influenced by particular political and cultural agendas and have in recent years come under increasing scrutiny from ethnomusicologists and ethnologists, it is important to the present study to evolve some kind of concept of membership to the *shakuhachi* tradition.

The concept of insider/outsider presents a number of problems in the context of writing about any musical tradition or culture or people. A typical paradigm which has been adopted by many ethnographers and ethnomusicologists until recently consists of the ‘outside’ writer who has ‘inside’ information about a group of people he or she is studying. Within this research paradigm, the researcher locates him/herself in the following ways: he/she writes to a readership who has no ‘inside’ knowledge; obtains ‘inside’ knowledge from the people who are, of course, ‘insiders’ to their tradition; invests in him/herself the authority to write about the people being studied, partly by claiming ‘outsider objectiveness’ (which the people under scrutiny, it is assumed, do not have) and partly because of the ‘inside’ information the writer possesses but the reader does not. The researcher/writer may even believe that his/her knowledge gives him/her the right to a kind of authority or power over the people or tradition that he/she is studying (see Said 1978:3,34).

What may not be acknowledged or even recognized is that the writer, the act of researching, the act of writing about the research and the resultant writings, all operate within a larger cultural and political context in which the writer and his or her readers become the ‘real insiders’ to the single hierarchically superior culture (the Western literate one), with the people being researched forever relegated to being ‘outsiders’ to that superior culture (see Crapanzano 1986:51-76). Another problem with this type of paradigm is that it treats the peoples, culture, or musical tradition being studied as objects who have little interaction with the rest of the world or with the writer, who operate outside of the context of time and change. As Clifford (1986:10, 18) has pointed out, such peoples, cultures or traditions do not exist. The weaknesses of this kind of writing and possible strategies in which they can be overcome, and other related issues are discussed in *Writing Cultures* (Clifford and Marcus ed.:1986) and elsewhere.

1.2 Insiders and Outsiders to the *Shakuhachi* Tradition

It remains a fact, however, that whatever the problematics of insider/outsider definitions in wider ethnographs, the concept of the ‘insider’ versus ‘outsider’ plays a pervasive role within the *shakuhachi* tradition. It is likely that the primary motivation many *shakuhachi* players in Japan have in learning to play the instrument and in continuing to be active in the tradition is the desire to identify with and be loyal to other members of the tradition as insiders (see Nakane 1970; Dore 1958:387; Vogel 1968:147-158).

The definition of ‘insider’ held by many *shakuhachi* players would most likely begin with their own ethnic group (Japanese) (cf. the beliefs of Inoue, a prominent member of the *shakuhachi* tradition, pp.288-291). The opinion seemingly shared by many Japanese, including *shakuhachi* players, is that in the case of the *shakuhachi*, and in fact all things related to Japanese culture, a prerequisite to being an ‘insider’ is to be born a Japanese. A non-Japanese is an ‘outsider’. *Gaijin* (外人) is the most commonly used word in Japan for any non-Japanese, and is commonly translated by the English word, foreigner. The two Chinese ideographs which make up the word *gaijin* literally mean ‘outside’ and ‘person’.

The word ‘foreigner’ does not accurately convey the meaning of the word *gaijin*. There can be relative degrees of ‘foreignness’; a person can be seen as more or less foreign to one’s own group. This in turn implies a potential to become more or less foreign in changing circumstances. In contrast, the words ‘outside’ and ‘inside’ are, like black and white, absolute opposites allowing no degree of relativity. One is either inside or outside. Since one is a Japanese only if born a Japanese, people who are *gaijin* are by definition complete and permanent outsiders. *Gaijin shakuhachi* players are likewise never ‘insiders’ to the *shakuhachi* tradition in the minds of many Japanese. These absolute definitions of insider and outsider are rejected in this thesis, and are replaced with less ethnocentric definitions presented below.

It should be stressed that there are always exceptions to the views described above, which like all writing, can never present nor represent reality, but at best evoke it (see Tyler 1986:122-140). There are Japanese who do not subscribe to the above ‘insider/outsider’ differentiation. Likewise, such differentiations are by no means a uniquely Japanese trait. Many members of Western literate cultures have always seen and continue to see themselves as the dominant world culture, politically, economically and socially.

1.3 Definitions of Insiders and Outsiders to the *Shakuhachi* Tradition

For the purpose of this discussion, I will provisionally define a *shakuhachi* ‘insider’ by three criteria. A member of the *shakuhachi* tradition is one who: 1) actively participates in the tradition and has a significant role in shaping the way the tradition

is transmitted, and; 2) has gained some kind of recognition of doing so within the tradition, and finally; 3) identifies him or herself with the tradition as an ‘insider’. Of the three criteria, the first is given the most weight; the doing is the being.

“Who actively participates” needs to be further defined. The most obvious meaning would be one who plays the instrument. There is the problem, however, of what the exact meaning of ‘to play’ is. One who has had several years of casual lessons on the instrument does not ‘play’ the instrument in the same way as one who has performed professionally for most of his¹ adult life.

On the other hand, according to the above definition, any enthusiastic beginner *shakuhachi* student, Japanese or non-Japanese, could be considered an ‘insider’ by actively and regularly practicing the instrument; by being recognized as a ‘beginner’; and by identifying with his new activity. The idea that the beginner occupies an important position within a tradition is not unique to the *shakuhachi*, being common throughout much of Japanese traditional culture. The term ‘beginner’s mind’ (初心, *shoshin*) is commonly used to describe the “innocence of the first inquiry”, a state of mind that is, in fact, desirable to maintain, however advanced one might become through years of practice: thus the aptly named book *Zen Mind Beginner’s Mind* (Suzuki:1970).

If the only method of actively participating in the tradition is to perform the instrument, where does this put the *shakuhachi* scholar? Is the beginner performer more of an insider than a scholar who has studied in depth various aspects of the tradition for decades but who has never actually played the instrument? Such a scholar participates actively in the tradition, albeit in ways other than performing the instrument. A scholar whose major areas of research include some aspect of the instrument, by actively researching the instrument and by being recognized as a *shakuhachi* scholar by insiders to the tradition, will therefore be regarded an insider in this thesis, especially if the scholar considers him or herself to be one.

There is also the question of the non-performing ‘patron’ of the *shakuhachi* tradition, who through substantial financial and other contributions greatly affects the tradition and its transmission. Because such patronage often has a decisive role in determining which pieces, performers and/or lineages succeed in terms of transmission from generation to generation, certain patrons in the context of this thesis will be regarded as insiders.

Thus, “one who actively participates” is one who is engaged in at least one of the following three areas: 1) performing and teaching; 2) scholarship; and 3) patronage. All three methods of active participation can lead to a significant role in shaping the tradition. An insider to the tradition then is one who actively participates in one or

¹ Attempts have been made to write this thesis in as non-sexist language as possible. The *shakuhachi* tradition in Japan is, however, almost totally a male domain, due to historical and social determinants. Even though these determinants do not operate outside Japan, in this thesis in general, the male gender will be used.

more of the above methods and fits the second and third criteria of the original definition, that is, being recognized as an insider and identifying oneself as such.

Conversely, an ‘outsider’ will be defined as one who does not actively participate in the tradition, is not recognized as an insider by others in the tradition, and/or does not identify with the tradition. For example, one who may have studied the instrument in the past but stopped doing so while still a beginner, that is, before receiving any sort of license or other recognition, would be an ‘outsider’. He would no longer be actively participating in the tradition. Furthermore, he would have no recognition within the tradition, and also would probably not consider himself a member of the tradition either. He would thus fail to meet all three of the criteria.

1.3.1 Layers of Insiders Within the *Shakuhachi* Tradition

The above definitions outline only a single, gross differentiation between the *shakuhachi* insider and the outsider. The *shakuhachi* tradition is not as simple as the single ‘us/ them’ dichotomy implied by the definitions. To be more precise, hierarchies and layers of ‘insiderness’ can be readily seen operating within the *shakuhachi* tradition. For example, most *shakuhachi* players consider themselves to be insiders not only to the *shakuhachi* tradition as a whole, but also to smaller, more exclusive parts of that tradition, such as the *ryû* (流, sect or school) or a similar organization, or an even smaller group, comprised only of students of a single teacher (see Inoue’s ideology, pp.288-291). For the past century, most of the *shakuhachi* tradition has been transmitted within the context of the *ryû*, at least in terms of numbers of performers. With a primary meaning of “current, stream, flow”, the word *ryû* also has the meanings of “style, fashion, type, form, manner; school, system; class, order, rate, rank, grade” (Nelson 1974:553). The character is frequently used in conjunction with another ideograph, *ha* (派, group party, clique; faction, sect, school) to form the word *ryûha* (流派), translated as “school of thought; a system” (Nelson 1974:545; 553-554).

The institution of the *ryûha* as it exists today is relatively new in the *shakuhachi* tradition, dating for the most part from the end of the 19th century. The tendency towards forming factions or groups, however, can be seen amongst *shakuhachi* players from at least the early 18th century. The *Kyotaku denki kokujikai* (see below, pp.36-39) written in 1795, lists numerous *ha* within the Fuke *shû* which existed throughout Japan. Since the beginning of the 20th century, most *shakuhachi* players belong to a *ryû* or similar organization, the biggest by far being Tozan *ryû* (都山流). Since the 1980s, there has been a trend away from the larger *ryû*, with a number of independent performers gaining prominence. A number of factors have contributed to this, such as the greater use of staff notation in place of *ryû* specific notation (see Lee 1988), and the trend of many performers to view their instrument no differently from western musical instruments, that is, not belonging to any one particular *ryû*. Nonetheless, even in the 1990s, one of the first questions asked when one *shakuhachi* player meets another is to what *ryû* does one belong, usually followed by the question, who is one’s teacher.

1.3.2 Location of Author within the *Shakuhachi* Tradition

It is necessary to locate the author of this thesis within the *shakuhachi* tradition in terms of the above definitions and descriptions. That location partially determines the validity of this thesis, and helps to answer the question, how entitled am I to write about the *shakuhachi* tradition.

Trimillos has addressed the issue of entitlement and other related issues from his unique perspective as an ethnomusicologist, a member of a minority culture (American-born Filipino) and a non-native performer (non-Japanese *koto* player). Though still an “unresolved issue”, he implies that entitlement is related to one’s sense of cultural identity and commitment. Both, according to Trimillos, are unavoidably stronger in a person who is born into a particular culture than in one who has adopted that culture (Trimillos 1990:9-11).

However true the latter statement may be, differentiations between insiders and outsiders that are determined primarily by birth implies a distinction that is too absolute to reflect reality accurately. For example, the “individual diversity” which Ryan finds in all Australian music groups (Ryan 1988-1989:15) certainly exists in the *shakuhachi* tradition as well, the homogeneity of the Japanese notwithstanding. Few ‘insiders’ of the *shakuhachi* tradition are ‘inside’ to exactly the same degree, despite the absolute distinctions implied in the words inside and outside, as discussed above.

A detailed description of the layer of ‘insiderness’ to which I belong is as follows. I became associated with Tozan *ryû* when I began *shakuhachi* lessons in 1971 with a teacher of that *ryû*, Hoshida Ichizan II (二世星田一山). I officially became a member of that *ryû* after being awarded ‘beginners rank’. The position and status of my ‘insiderness’ could be categorized as being inside the *shakuhachi* tradition as a member of Tozan *ryû*, inside Tozan *ryû* as a student of Hoshida and inside the ranks of Hoshida’s students as a beginner. Being a student of Hoshida, even as a beginner, contributed slightly to my rank as insider because Hoshida was one of the higher ranking teachers of Tozan *ryû* in the Kansai district.

About eight months after beginning *shakuhachi* lessons, I changed teachers, having been introduced by a fellow *shakuhachi* player to a teacher who taught classical or *koten honkyoku*, a genre of music not in the Tozan *ryû* repertoire. The new teacher, Sakai Chikuho II (二世酒井竹保), was at that time the *iemoto* or head of Chikuho *ryû*.

By changing teachers, I also changed my position as an insider within the *shakuhachi* tradition. First of all, though still an insider to the tradition as a whole, I became an outsider to Tozan *ryû*. This left me no longer a member of the largest fraternity of *shakuhachi* players in Japan. On the other hand, by becoming the student of the son of the founder of Chikuho *ryû* and its then head, the relative level of my ‘insiderness’ within my new *ryû* increased compared to the level I had had within Tozan *ryû*. By studying with a teacher of a lineage possessing classical *honkyoku*, I also became an insider to that part of the tradition, an important consideration even in the minds of

many members of Tozan *ryû*, who are conscious of being outsiders to that most traditional genre of music in the *shakuhachi* tradition.

In the early 1980s, after Chikuho II became ill and no longer taught the *shakuhachi*, I began taking lessons from Yokoyama Katsuya. As with Chikuho II, Yokoyama is also the head of a *shakuhachi* organization, Chikushinkai (竹心会, Spirit of Bamboo Group). Yokoyama's father was a relatively well-known figure in Kinko *ryû* which, unlike Chikuho *ryû* and Tozan *ryû*, is not a single organization with one *iemoto*, but rather is a school (as in a "school of art") or style, delineated by a notation system and repertoire as transmitted by Kurosawa Kinko I² and his students. Though not called *ryû*, Chikushinkai functions as one.³

Membership in the Chikushinkai is not given the importance of membership in Tozan or Chikuho *ryû*, or even one of the bigger Kinko *ryû* branches such as Chikuyûsha (竹友社). Being a student of Yokoyama or one of his students is what is stressed. This is in part because Yokoyama's repertoire originates from three distinct sources, Kinko *ryû* through his father, Myôan *honkyoku* as uniquely transmitted by Watazumi dôso and what is known as Azuma *ryû* (吾妻流), as espoused by Fukuda Randô (福田蘭堂), Yokoyama's third teacher. Yokoyama's teaching and performing repertoire, which also contains a high percentage of modern compositions not affiliated with any *ryû*, exemplifies the eclectic nature of many of the *shakuhachi* performers active from the 1970s. With Yokoyama and others a trend towards the reduction in the numbers of layers and hierarchy of 'insiderness' in the *shakuhachi* tradition can be observed. The layer of insider/outsider created by the *ryû* and a hierarchy based on the status of oneself and one's teacher within the context of a *ryû* is being rejected by some insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition for a more universal hierarchy based in part upon musicianship as defined in western terms.

Despite the myriad of problems with the types of differentiations arising from the dichotomy of insider/outsider, that dichotomy is relevant to the present study due to the importance given it by the members of the *shakuhachi* tradition. In this study, an ethnocentric definition of the concepts of insider/outsider as described above will be replaced by definitions that attempt to be more universally applicable.

This chapter presented a discussion of the concepts of the insider and the outsider. It described some of the problems which may arise with the use of these concepts, especially in the researching and writing of ethnographic studies. The pervasiveness and manner with which the insider/outsider dichotomy exist in Japanese culture in general and in the *shakuhachi* tradition in particular were discussed. Finally, definitions and clarification of the concepts of insider and outsider to the *shakuhachi* tradition as they will be adopted for this thesis were presented. Chapter 2 surveys the

² Kurosawa Kinko I (黒沢琴古, 1710-1771), credited with originating the Kinko style of *shakuhachi* playing (see Chapter 3 p.96).

³ There is room for argument with Gutzwiller's assertion (1983:242) that only two branches of Kinko *ryû* (one of which being the branch of Gutzwiller's teacher) perform all of the functions of a *ryû*, that is "making of instruments, teaching, organization of concerts, printing and publishing of its music, etc." Chikushinkai does all of the above except for publishing its own music. This last function loses its importance when the predominately oral means of transmission employed by Yokoyama and his teacher Watazumi is considered.

literature of the *shakuhachi* tradition within four categories relating to transmission processes, which are determined by the concepts of insider and outsider.

CHAPTER 2

SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

2. Four Types of Literature

In the previous chapter, the insider/outsider paradigm was discussed and defined in the context of the *shakuhachi* tradition. Four main types of literature can be delineated by applying the insider/outsider criteria to a discussion of the tradition, and by examining the role of various types of writing in reference to the question of transmission. Dividing the literature into four categories based upon the insider/outsider criteria facilitates the discussion of their relevances to the theme of transmission in a number of ways (see below). The four types are: 1) literature written by insiders to the tradition for other insiders to the tradition; 2) literature written by insiders to the tradition, but addressed to people who do not belong to the tradition; 3) literature written by outsiders to the tradition aimed primarily at insiders to the tradition; and 4) literature written by outsiders to the tradition for other outsiders. In adopting the four categories I am not unaware of the problematics of defining insider and outsider. These have been addressed in Chapter 1.

The first three categories are comprised of literature that is directly implicated in the transmission of the *shakuhachi* tradition. The first type, literature written by insiders to the tradition for other insiders to the tradition, serves primarily to define aspects of the tradition for its members and strengthen their sense of “membership” and thus the tradition itself. Examples of this type are musical scores written in notation specific to the *shakuhachi*, some types of primary historical sources, limited edition publications and certain kinds of scholarly publications (see pp.[27-44](#)).

The second type of literature, that written by insiders but addressed to people who do not belong to the tradition, functions to increase the number of persons who belong to the tradition and to improve the image held by the general public of the tradition and its members. Literature that is directed in any way to outsider readers will be included in this type, even if it is mostly read by insiders. Examples of the second category are some types of books and publications, most scholarly publications, beginner manuals, descriptive notes included in commercial recordings and concert programme notes (see below, pp.[44-55](#)).

The third type of literature, written by outsiders but primarily aimed at a readership who are insiders to the tradition, serves to help establish, and more importantly, broaden the scope of the tradition as well as the sense of identity held by its members. Examples of this category include many modern compositions for the *shakuhachi* and government documents (see pp.[56-58](#)).

The fourth category, namely literature written by outsiders to the tradition for other outsiders is the smallest of the four categories. It is nevertheless useful in the study of the transmission of the tradition since literature of this type indicates how the tradition is viewed by outsiders, that is, literate members of the society in which the *shakuhachi* tradition exists. This type frequently offers data on the tradition not found in literature of the other three categories. Examples of this type are certain historical sources and some scholarly publications (see below, pp.[58-59](#)).

Finally, it must be understood that not all of the literature on the *shakuhachi* falls strictly into a single category. Much of the literature is read by both “insiders” and “outsiders” to the tradition. For example, many of the critical reviews written by music critics and published in newspapers and magazines have a readership that represents every degree of “insiderness” and “outsiderness”. In this study, the classifications given to individual items of *shakuhachi* literature are generalizations based on the readership to which the writer is primarily addressing him/herself. For an intended readership to be considered insiders, it must consist entirely of insiders. For example, by definition scholarly publications are intended to be read by scholars, who may be insiders to the world of scholarship but are not insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition. Even though some scholarly publications on the *shakuhachi* might be read primarily by insiders, they still belong to the second type of literature.

The following survey of *shakuhachi* literature, divided into the above four categories, is not meant to be an exhaustive and comprehensive list. Rather it is intended to give a general idea of what kinds of literature exist, as well as provide from each type of literature specific examples that are of particular interest.

2.1 First Type of Literature: Authored and Read by Insiders

Included in the first type of literature are musical scores written in *shakuhachi* notation, historical written documents such as *Kyotaku denki kokuji kai* (虚宅伝記国字解), limited edition publications by members of the *shakuhachi* tradition, periodicals and possibly certain articles in publications. Literature whose intended readership encompasses outsiders as well as insiders, even if the actual readership may be almost exclusively insiders, is not included in this type.

2.1.1 Musical Scores in *Shakuhachi* Notation

The most common example of the first type of literature, that written by members of the *shakuhachi* tradition for other members, is the musical score written in *shakuhachi* notation. As will be discussed in Chapter 5 (p.210), there are numerous notation systems for the instrument, all of which are believed to have been in common use for no more than 200 years. The scores are written by *shakuhachi* players for other *shakuhachi* players. *Shakuhachi* scores, though written for insiders by insiders, perform a number of distinct functions within the tradition, as follows.

First of all, almost all scores of traditional *shakuhachi honkyoku* do not share the prescriptive and/or descriptive functions typical of music scores used in other Japanese music traditions, including those of other *shakuhachi* music genres.⁴ For the most part, *shakuhachi* notation systems, especially in the case of the classical *honkyoku*, are very skeletal and are neither prescriptive nor descriptive (see Lee 1988, 1991). This is to be expected in a primarily oral tradition. Because of this, “authentic” realizations of historical scores, that is, performances of the pieces that correspond to

⁴ Prescriptive notation instructs or dictates how the music is to be performed. Descriptive notation records or delineates the performance of the music (see Nettl 1983:68-27).

performances at the time of composition, are impossible.⁵ That is to say, it is highly unlikely that a performance today of a *honkyoku* based upon the interpretation of a *shakuhachi* score will ever reproduce performances of the piece as they were realized at the time of their notation, regardless of how informed the interpretation might be.

Shakuhachi notation systems function primarily as memory devices that aid in the learning and subsequent performance of the *honkyoku*. Both standardized published scores and non-standard manuscripts function in this way. The major *shakuhachi ryû* all use printed (and consequently standardized) scores today and have done so since the turn of the 20th century. At the same time, there has always been, and still is, a large part of the *shakuhachi* tradition in which written notation does not and never has played an important role in the process of transmission (see below, p.231).

The most prominent examples of standardized published scores of *koten honkyoku* are those of the Kinko *ryû*, which usually number thirty-six pieces. Of the four major publishers of Kinko style *shakuhachi* music, Chikuyûsha (竹友社), Kinko shuppansha (琴古出版社), Chikumeisha (竹盟社) and Dômonkai (童門会), only the latter three publish *honkyoku*; the first publishes only *gaikyoku*. The largest of the four groups, Chikuyûsha, publishes the notation of the Kawase Junsuke (川瀬順輔) lineage. Chikuho *ryû* publishes scores of sixty *koten honkyoku*, the largest number of any *ryû*, but very few *shakuhachi* players perform Chikuho *honkyoku*, compared with the large number of Kinko performers. There are also published scores of the Myôan taizan lineage. Of the four published scores mentioned above, Kinko scores are generally the most detailed and consequently result in the most standardized transmission of the pieces. Chikuho *ryû* scores are fairly standardized, but are much less detailed than the Kinko scores, and retain many inconsistencies (see Lee 1991:27-33). The Myôan taizan scores are the most skeletal in form of the three groups of published scores.⁶

In many cases, notation used in the transmission of *honkyoku* is not in the form of standardized, printed scores. The student may be left by the teacher to notate the piece for himself as he learns it. Yamaue writes of his habitual practice of notating what he had learned of a new piece on lesson day while on the train returning home from his lesson (Yamaue 1986:4). Figure 1⁷ shows an example of Yamaue's notation. Students might also rely on scores which have been written out previously by other students. This is a common occurrence amongst the students of Yokoyama, the majority of whom rely on notation written by Furuya, one of Yokoyama's most senior students (see Figure 2). When Yokoyama began teaching me a new piece, he would frequently give me a photocopy of a score written by Furuya, but would qualify its use by saying that it contained some errors. Such imperfect scores are nonetheless sufficient to help learn and remember the piece.

⁵ The concept of "authenticity" is relatively simple when applied to visual arts, for example in determining the authenticity of a painting attributed to Monet. Problems arise when attempts are made to define and/or realise an "authentic" performance of a piece of music. See Taruskin (1984), Leech-Eilkinson (1984), and Temperley (1984) for a discussion of authenticity.

⁶ See NOD 1989:333 for examples of six different published *shakuhachi* notations.

⁷ All figures are in Volume 2 of this thesis.

A number of systems of *shakuhachi* notation and/or scores written in *shakuhachi* notation serve other completely non-musical functions. One such non-musical function is that of certifying transmission of the piece. Once a teacher deems that a person has learned a piece (without the use of notation) and can perform it correctly, he will write out the score of the piece, and present it to the student. Scores in this case function as a symbol of the accomplishment of the transmission of the *honkyoku*. The score certifies that the student now possesses the piece.

An example of this can be seen in a score for the well-known piece “*Shika no tône*” (鹿の遠音, ‘Distant Call of the Deer’), written in Japanese black and red ink by Araki Kodô II (荒木古童) in May, 1853 (Figure 3). This original score is typical of scores of that time. It is in the collection of the San’in Shakuhachi Dôjyo (山陰尺八道場), which belonged to the late Kowata Suigetsu (小幡水月).

The name Hirose Mochiku (廣瀬茂竹), for whom the score was written, appears at the very left hand side, that is, the very end of the score. The name Araki Kodô II (荒木古童) is found immediately to the right and below Mochiku’s name (Figure 3, no.1). Mochiku was a *shakuhachi* player from Izumo, a student of Kondô Sôetsu (近藤宗悦), the founder of the Kansai Sôetsu *ryû* (関西宗悦流), which, interestingly was not known for *honkyoku*, but rather for its repertoire of *gaikyoku* (外曲, ensemble pieces typically for *koto*, *shamisen*, voice and *shakuhachi*). This particular score was written by Kodô II in May in the year Kaei 6 (1853) (Figure 3, no.2).

The musical notation takes up only one-half of the sheet of paper on which it is written (Figure 3, no.3). The second half documents the transmission of the piece from Kodô to Mochiku (Figure 3, no.4). The complete text is as follows:

出雲の茂竹ぬしこたひ此地に遊暦[歴]し
 □□わが茅舎をたつね本曲をこはるゝ故に
 予もまた外曲をこふとともに其曲濃
 たへなるを感じこのかたの奥秘
 鹿の遠音といへる曲を伝へ畢

東京尺八指南

二代目

荒木古童

嘉永六ツのとし

癸 丑五月

廣瀬茂竹雅君

Izumo no Mochiku nushi kotahi kono chi ni
yûrekishi
[tamahi] waga bôoku wo tatsune honkyoku wo
koharuru yue ni
yômo mata gaikyoku wo kofu to tomo ni sono
kyoku nô
tahenaru wo kanshi kono kata no ôhi
Shika no tône to iheru kyoku wo tsutahe yufu
Tôkyô shakuhachi shinan ni dai me

Araki Kodô
Kaei mutsu no toshi
Mizunoto ushi go gatsu
Hirose Mochiku Gakun

“On this occasion, Mr. Mochiku of Izumo, making a walking tour to each district, visited my humble abode in this district [Edo]. He asked of me [to play] a *honkyoku*, and so at that point I also requested of him [to play] a *gaikyoku*. I felt that the performance of that piece was superior beyond words. And so I transmitted, to its completion, a secret piece from this side [Kinko ryû], a piece called ‘*Shika no Tône* ’”.

Tôkyô Shakuhachi Instructor
Second Generation
Araki Kodô
In the Year Kaei 6 [1853]
10th Calendar Sign, Fifth Month of the Ox
Hirose Mochiku, Esquire

(translation by Lee)

The score certifies that Mochiku went to Tokyo, where he taught Kodô a *gaikyoku* and, in exchange for this piece, was taught the “secret” piece “*Shika no tône*” by Kodô. It is interesting that this exchange occurred despite their belonging to two different and, in a sense competing, sects.

As noted above (p.28), an “authentic” historical reading of the score is virtually impossible. A musical interpretation of the notation based upon careful research, though quite problematic, is possible. The *Syakuhati kenkyûkai* (尺八研究会) presented one interpretation of Kodô’s “*Shika no tône*” notation in 1990, at the 4th Symposium of the International Musicological Society.⁸ Kodô’s score was realized in the following way. First of all, the piece was performed on instruments made at around the same time as the score. Major differences between the construction of such historical instruments and modern instruments result in major differences in sound (see p.278), and in the manner in which the instruments are played (1991:642). Secondly, comparisons made between the score in question and five other scores of the piece, written between 1826 and 1929 led to conclusions as to which phrase was performed by which of the two performers. Finally, conclusions as to which pitches would be produced were made in light of the nature of the historical instruments, and in consultation of old documents about fingerings, such as *Shakuhachi hikki* (尺八筆記, ‘Notes on the Shakuhachi’).⁹ The resultant performance was not intended to be an “authentic” performance, but rather a musically plausible realization based upon what information is available today on the performance practices of the time.

⁸ The historical interpretation of the piece made by the *Syakuhati kenkyûkai* was performed by Simura Satoshi and Riley Lee on 23 July 1990 at the Ôtsuki Nôgakudô (a Noh theatre in Osaka).

⁹ *Shakuhachi hikki* was originally written by Miyaji Ikkan 宮地一閑, edited by Yamamoto Manzu 山本萬津, and published in 1816.

What is important to note here is that Kodô's score was written after Kodô had transmitted the piece to his satisfaction to Mochiku, that is, it is a certificate of transmission. The sheet of Japanese paper with its black and red brush strokes materially symbolizes the ability to perform the piece, just as the written characters of the score symbolize the various series of musical events that make up that piece.

Many *honkyoku* scores have a political function in that they establish or enhance the authority of a particular teacher or lineage. Though the primary function of published *shakuhachi* scores is that of a mnemonic device (see above, p.28), all published scores also function politically by standardizing and disseminating the performance style of the publisher at a rate and degree far exceeding non-published scores.

A specific example of the political function of *honkyoku* scores can be seen in the case of Sakai Shôdô. Shôdô took over the position of head (*iemoto*) of Chikuho *ryû* from his eldest brother, Chikuho II in 1985 in the following sudden and controversial manner. In 1981, Chikuho II fell ill, which forced his then 88 year old father, Chikuho I, out of retirement. Immediately after Chikuho I's death in October 1984, Shôdô announced that in accordance to his father's last wishes, he had become the third *iemoto* of Chikuho *ryû*. Chikuho II was too ill at the time to voice an opinion. A number of senior members of the school who claimed to be present at the time, disputed Shôdô's interpretation of his father's last wishes. Soon after Shôdô became *iemoto*, most of the former students of Chikuho I and Chikuho II, that is, nearly all of the senior members of the school, either quit or were expelled. A majority of these members regrouped in 1986 to form a new school of *shakuhachi*, called *Myôan Shakuhachi Dôyûkai* (明暗尺八道友会, 'Organization of Friends of the Way of the Myôan Shakuhachi') (Lee 1986:82-85).¹⁰

Shôdô prefers to use the scores written by one of his teachers, Jin Nyodô (who did not belong to Chikuho *ryû*) when performing and teaching *honkyoku*, even when there are scores of the same pieces written in the notation system of his own school, Chikuho *ryû*. The scores in Chikuho notation, which are published by Chikuho *ryû* were, however, written by Chikuho II. Shôdô questions the authenticity of these scores and asserts that they reflect to an unacceptable degree the editorial and artistic idiosyncrasies of Chikuho II, who wrote them while he was *iemoto*. According to Shôdô, because they do not adequately represent the pieces as originally taught by Jin, he was forced to make the rather drastic decision of using Jin's notation instead of the published scores of his own school.

Simura has suggested that Shôdô's decision may have been more politically than artistically motivated. If Shôdô's performances of *honkyoku* become recognized as being authentic, while his predecessor's versions are thought of as impure transmissions, his authority as *iemoto* will increase (Simura OC1989). As described elsewhere (Lee 1986:82-86), many members of the school felt that at the time of his becoming *iemoto*, Shôdô lacked authority. Figure 4 compares part of a Chikuho score with the corresponding Jin notation used by Shôdô.

There are a few exceptional *honkyoku* scores which are intended to function as prescriptive learning devices. These scores are usually handwritten transnotations of

¹⁰ See Lee 1986:82-85 for a complete description of this event.

scores of pieces not found in the repertoire of the writer's lineage. Such scores are written in a notation system different from that of the scribe, and are used in an attempt to learn a *honkyoku* without being taught by a teacher. Since the advent of the cassette tape, this type of score is usually used in tandem with one or more recordings of the piece as performed by one or more members of the lineage from which the piece originated.

Frequently, scores on which the transnotations are based are standardized versions printed and published by a *ryû*, themselves most likely derived from earlier handwritten scores. The printed notations are converted once again in manuscript form but in a different notation system. In the case of Tozan *ryû*, such manuscripts have frequently gone the full circle of standardization by being published (privately) in a Tozan transnotation format. The demand for such transnotations is high due to the complete lack of classical *honkyoku* in the Tozan *ryû* repertoire. For comparison, Figure 5 presents the same part of two published scores of the *honkyoku* “*Kyûshû reibo*”, in the original Myôan notation system, and then as transnotated into the Tozan notation system. The process described above is one way in which numerous variations and changes occur in *honkyoku* scores.

It is not unusual to find the existence of numerous and inconsistent manuscript scores for a single *koten honkyoku*. The scores typically vary in content, notation system, function and date of creation. Manuscript scores of *koten honkyoku* are not limited to historical documents. They continue to be written and used today, and contribute to the variation and change that has always occurred in much of the *honkyoku* repertoire. An example of this is the case of the piece “*Reibo*”, upon which this thesis focuses (see Chapter 4).

Recently, a number of collections of *honkyoku* scores have been published in book form by *shakuhachi* enthusiasts or organizations. These collections feature facsimiles of hand written scores of pieces either of a single lineage (for example, the collected scores of the Kimpû *ryû honkyoku*) (Uchiyama 1989), or of one individual (for example, that of Yamaue Getsuzan) (1982). Included in some of these collections are personal histories, anecdotes, photo charts, genealogy charts and in at least one case (Uchiyama 1989), fairly detailed explanations of the scores. The form that these explanations take is explored in Chapter 5.

2.1.2 Other Written Historical Documents, Including the *Kyotaku denki kokuji kai*

Music scores in *shakuhachi*-specific notation are by no means the only written sources of the first type of literature, that is, sources written for insiders by insiders. *Kyotaku denki kokuji kai* (虚鐸伝記国字解, ‘The Legend of the Empty Bell Translated and Interpreted in Japanese’), written in 1795 by Yamamoto Morihide (山本守秀), is a document of primary importance to the *shakuhachi* tradition and is one of the earliest examples of this kind of literature. This book contains what is claimed to be a copy of a 13th century Chinese book entitled *Kyotaku Denki* (虚鐸伝記, ‘The Legend of the Empty Bell’), and an annotated translation into Japanese. It describes the origins of the *shakuhachi* tradition and its founding and

patron saints.¹¹ Though its description of the genesis of the tradition has been proved fictitious rather than fact by Nakatsuka Chikusen (中塚竹禅 1887-1944) (1979), it is the single most influential work in the literature in defining the identity of almost all *shakuhachi honkyoku* players.

The document is divided into two sections. The first section, written in *kanbun* (漢文, Chinese script), describes the beginnings of a *shakuhachi*-playing Zen Buddhist sect in China in the 9th century and the subsequent introduction of the *shakuhachi* into Japan three centuries later by the historical figure Kakushin Hattô Zenji (覺心法燈禪師, also known by the honorary title Hattô or Hottô Enmyô Kokushi 法灯円明国師). Hottô founded the temple Saihōji 西方寺 (present day Kōkokuji 興国寺 in Kyōto) in 1254, which still houses numerous documents and writings by or about him.

The second section, written in 18th century Japanese, is a commentary on the first section of the document. It briefly describes the history of the Fuke sect (the Edo-period Zen Buddhist sect which had *shakuhachi* as the focal point of its spiritual practices) in Japan and the state of its affairs at the time of writing. Nakatsuka, a student of Kawase Junsuke I (川瀬順助) and thus a member of a major branch of Kinko *ryū*, sought to find a factual basis for the legend of the origins of the *shakuhachi* and the Fuke sect as presented in *Kyotaku denki kokuji kai*.

After an exhaustive search through Hottô Zenji's writings, which did not turn up a single mention of the *shakuhachi* or the Fuke sect, Nakatsuka began to question other parts of *Kyotaku denki*. Further research by Nakatsuka led him to conclude that there was no factual basis for the first section of the document. Nakatsuka was said to have died before completing his research. But in 1989, a cache of his writings which had not been previously published was found. These writings were presented to the son of Nakatsuka's *shakuhachi* teacher, Kawase Junsuke II, who has in turn allowed the ethnomusicologist Kamisangō to examine them (Kamisangō 1988:40-43). The contents of these papers have not yet been made public.

In addition to presenting a legendary account of the origins of the *honkyoku* tradition, *Kyotaku denki kokuji kai* also includes lists of temples of *komusō*¹² in existence at the time it was written, and commentaries on various pieces performed by the *komusō* of the day. It is thus a valuable primary source not only for its presentation of what is now believed to be the legend of the origins of the *honkyoku* tradition, but also for the insight it gives into the world of the *komusō* during the mid-Edo period.

¹¹ Briefly, the legend describes how the death of Fuke (普化, Chinese: Ouhua), a Chinese Zen priest of the 9th century, inspired his disciple, Chōhaku (張伯, Chinese: Zhāng Bō) to fashion the first *shakuhachi* and perform the first *honkyoku*, thus creating a new *shakuhachi* playing Zen Buddhist sect, and how this sect was brought to and established in Japan.

¹² *Komusō* (虚無僧, 'priests of nothingness') were *shakuhachi* playing Zen Buddhist priests who were active throughout Japan during the Edo period (1600-1868) and briefly beyond until the Fuke sect was abolished in 1871. See Chapter 3 (p.103).

Another document similar to *Kyotaku denki kokujikai* is *Keichô no okitegaki* (慶長掟, ‘Written Decree of the Keichô Era’) (see p.115). This document sets out the purposes and privileges of the newly formed Fuke sect and, like *Kyotaku denki*, is of great historical significance. As with *Kyotaku denki*, the original does not exist, and in all likelihood, there never was an “original” (Kurihara 1918:144-151). False claims were also made as to its date of composition (1612) and its author (the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu). This document will be discussed more fully in Chapter 3 (pp.115-122).

The unreliability of documents such as *Kyotaku denki kokujikai* as historical sources, and the origin legends on which they are based can be seen not only in the case of the *shakuhachi*, but in other Japanese music traditions as well. Three examples of traditions with similar written sources containing myth origins are found within the guilds of blind musicians, *tôdô-za* (当道座), *goze* (瞽女) and *môsô biwa* (盲僧琵琶) (Fritch 1991:147-152). As Fritch has pointed out, despite their unreliability in documenting historical events, these types of sources have functioned well as a method by which the members of the music traditions bolster their sense of self-confidence. They also served to lessen the adverse effects of a society at large that was frequently hostile to or exploitative of the guilds. Forgeries like *Keichô no okitegaki* and *Kyotaku denki* are not limited only to Japanese music traditions, but occurred throughout Japanese society. Examples of forgeries in other areas of Japanese society, such as commerce, are described in the aptly named article, “Forging the Past; Medieval Counterfeit Documents” (Tonomura 1985:69-96).

Representative of other historical sources that belong to the first type of literature, and perhaps the most symbolically significant of such documents, are the three documents or “seals” of the *Sangu san'in* (三具三印, ‘Three tools, three seals’). *Sangu san'in* were presented to a person who had officially attained *komusô* status (see Chapter 3, p.122). The most important of the “three seals” is the *Honsoku juyo* (本則授与, ‘Conferment of the Original Rules’), which states the tenets of the Fuke sect and certifies that the bearer is officially a *komusô*. The other two documents or seals of the *komusô* are the *kaiin* (会印, an identity card, renewable every six months) and the *tsûin* (通印, a pass). The latter allowed the bearer to travel freely throughout the country. This privilege, first stated in *Keichô no okitegaki* (see above), was unique in what was then a country with severe travel restrictions (see Sanson 1931:448 and 1963:105). In general, travel was discouraged both by the lords of individual fiefs as well as by the Shogunate in Edo. The travel restrictions applied to all strata of society.

This type of literature also includes the many directives issued to the rank and file *komusô* by the three head temples of the Fuke sect (Ichigetsuji 一月寺; Reihôji 鈴法寺; and Myôanji 明暗寺). In 1694 the Fuke temple in Kyôto, Myôanji, issued the document *Honsoku deshi e moshi watasu sadame* (本則弟子へ申渡定, ‘Declaration of Rules for Disciples’). Around the same time, Myôanji also issued the document *Kakun sanjûsanka jô* (家訓三十三ヶ条, ‘Thirty-Three Rules of the House’). According to Kamisangô (1974:18), these documents indirectly indicate that as early as the late 17th century, the Fuke sect acknowledged the fact that *shakuhachi* were performed by commoners. They also indicated that the professed spiritual intentions of the members of the Fuke sect sometimes differed from their real, more musical intentions (see Chapter 3, p.142). Other such documents issued by the administration of the Fuke sect to its members can be found in such sources as the

Komusô shiryô shûhōzan kōkokuji myōanji kankei bunshû
(虚無僧史料驚峰山興国寺明暗寺関係文集, 'Komusô Historical Documents;
collected works concerning the Myōan temple of the Shûhōzan Kōkoku temple')¹³
(Iwai 1983) and Nakatsuka's *Kinko Shakuhashi Shikan* (1979).

The above discussion covers the most important historical written sources that were authored by insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition for a readership of insiders.

2.1.3 Limited Edition Publications

A number of books on the *shakuhachi* could be included in either the first or third type of literature. Though possibly written for both members and non-members of the tradition, in practice most of these books are published in limited editions and are of interest primarily to a select group of *shakuhachi* "insiders". They usually include, moreover, jargon and technical descriptions exclusive to the *shakuhachi* tradition, as well as descriptions of pieces and people which assume insider knowledge on the part of the reader. These books will therefore be treated as belonging to the first type of literature, written by and for insiders.

Examples of these books are the biography of Tani Kyōchiku (Inagaki 1985); 普化宗史、その尺八奏法の楽理 (*Fukeshūshi, sono shakuhachi sōhō no gakuri*, 'A History of the Fuke Sect; Theories of the Playing Methods of the Shakuhachi', Takahashi 1979); and a book on the Myōan *shakuhachi* (Tominomori 1979). Other books and sources of this nature have been written by Inagaki (1976); Inagaki/Izui/Takahashi (1981); Izui/Takahashi (1984); Takahashi (1971); Toya (1984); Ishibashi/ Kanda (1981); Tomimori (1975, 1979, n.d.); and Uchiyama (1989).

Much of this type of literature is anecdotal or is based on the personal opinion of the author or the official line of a particular school or lineage and/or on popular legends. One of the primary roles of these books is to attempt to define the tradition. Written primarily by members of the *shakuhachi* tradition, they sometimes show the preconceptions of the authors, i.e., that a particular lineage, school or teacher is, for certain historical reasons, superior or inferior to others. Examples of this are found in books about Uramoto Setcho (浦本浙潮) (Inagaki, ed. 1985) and Takahashi Kūzan (高橋空山) (1979). The *shakuhachi* player Konashi Kinsui (小梨錦水) is credited by Uramoto with a highly authoritative lineage, while Takahashi, who represents a different lineage, asserts that Konashi has little if any authority at all. A detailed discussion of this is presented in Chapter 4 (pp. [185-187](#)).

Sources of this type may be of limited use as historical sources, due to the strong personal bias of the author. On the other hand, personal bias can also be viewed as a strength insofar as it provides insiders' views of the tradition. Furthermore, these sources are frequently the only information on certain aspects of the tradition. Documents of this type are, for example, the main sources for the *shakuhachi* tradition between the Meiji era and the 1960s.

¹³ These exist as facsimiles of a series of ten volumes.

2.1.4 Non-scholarly Periodicals and Articles

Other examples of the first type of literature are periodicals published solely for members of the *shakuhachi* tradition. These include *Ichi on jo butsu* (一音成仏, ‘One Sound, Buddhahood’), published by 虚無僧研究会 (*Komusô kenkyû kai*, ‘Komusô Research Organization’) since 1981 and ten issues of *Shakuhachi hyôron* (尺八評論, ‘Shakuhachi Review’), published biannually by 尺八評論同人会 (*Shakuhachi hyôron dôjin kai*, ‘Fraternity of Shakuhachi Reviewers’) from 1982 until 1990.

Newsletters of individual *ryû* are also regularly published. For example, a newsletter for members of Chikuho *ryû*, *Chikuho ryû shakuhachi gaku hô* (竹保流尺八楽報, ‘Report on the Shakuhachi Music of Chikuho Ryû’) was published from 1929 until at least 1985, with a total of 103 issues. *Chikushinkai* (竹心会, ‘Soul of the Bamboo Organization’), the organization of Yokoyama’s students, has periodically published a newsletter since 1986. The newsletter, originally of the same name as the organization, was changed in 1988 to *Chikuin* (竹韻, ‘Bamboo Poetry’). The many such publications of this type are usually distributed only to members of the organizations which publish them.

There are also a few examples of periodicals in English by and for *shakuhachi* players. The most prominent of these are *Take no Michi* (竹の道, ‘The Way of Bamboo’, 1979-1981), the “British Shakuhachi Society Newsletter” (1983-1984), the “International Shakuhachi Society Annals” (1990) and “Chikuho Ryû, Hawaii Newsletter” (Lee, ed.1981-1986; Herr, ed. 1986-1992), the most long-lived of these publications.

A number of periodicals publish articles written by members of the *shakuhachi* tradition for a readership of *shakuhachi* players which also contain articles about other instruments. Articles in these periodicals generally are written for outsiders as well as insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition. Even the articles which seem to be written specifically for *shakuhachi* players, such as discussions of playing techniques or interpretations of pieces for the *shakuhachi*, are actually written for both insiders and outsiders, insofar as these articles are written for a readership which includes firstly the editor of the periodical, usually an outsider to the *shakuhachi* tradition, and secondly readers of the periodicals which are also not members of the *shakuhachi* tradition. Such periodicals will be classified as literature of the second type, and will be discussed in detail below.

One of the earliest examples of this type of periodical is *Sankyoku* (三曲, literally, ‘Pieces for Three’, the term for the popular chamber music genre composed for the *shamisen*, *koto*, *shakuhachi* and voice), published between 1921 and 1944. The periodicals *Nihon ongaku* (日本音楽, ‘Japanese Music’), *Kikan hôgaku* (季刊邦楽, ‘Traditional Japanese Music Quarterly’) and *Hôgaku* (邦楽, ‘Traditional Japanese Music’) are other examples of this type of literature.

2.2 Second Literature Type: Authored by Insiders for Outsiders

The second type of literature, authored by insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition for a readership which includes outsiders, is the largest of the four types. This type of literature plays an especially important role in the transmission of the tradition, particularly as a means of creating and/or projecting a sense of identity and for attracting adherents to the tradition. The tradition thus in part defines itself by describing itself to the outside. Literature belonging to the second type of literature includes historical documents, books and other publications, scholarly publications, articles in periodicals, beginner manuals, descriptive notes included in commercially released recordings and concert program notes.

2.2.1 Historical Documents

A number of Edo period documents were written by the administrators of Ichigetsuji and Reihôji, the head temples of the Fuke sect, and were addressed to the Edo government. As such they belong to this type of literature. They were frequently answers to official queries from the government (see pp.57-58), or petitions to the government. For example, in one such petition, Ichigetsuji protested the arrest of one of its member *komusô* named Yûga (友鷺). The petition resulted in the famous *Sengoku sôdô* (仙石騒動, ‘Sengoku Disturbance’) trial, in which the special legal status of the *komusô* was upheld. The person responsible for the arrest was beheaded. (Mikami 1902:63-66).

2.2.2 Books and Other Publications

An early example of published books of this type is Kurihara Kôta’s (栗原広太) *Shakuhachi shikô* (尺八史考, ‘An Historical Consideration of the Shakuhachi’). This book, originally published in 1918, is the first comprehensive history of the instrument. Based upon meticulous research and quoting from extensive historical primary sources, *Shakuhachi shikô* was reprinted in 1975. A more recent example of literature of this type is *Shakuhachi no rekishi* (尺八の歴史, ‘A History of the Shakuhachi’) by Ueno Katami (上野堅實) written in 1983. Although both books are widely read by insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition, they present the history of the *shakuhachi* in terms that can be understood by the outsider.

Possibly the first book by a *shakuhachi* player about the *shakuhachi* that was written especially for the general public and published by a major publishing house is *Shakuhachi gaku no miryoku* (尺八楽の魅力, ‘The Fascination of Shakuhachi Music’), written by Yokoyama Katsuya (横山勝也)¹⁴ in 1986. Writing largely about his own experiences as a professional *shakuhachi* performer, Yokoyama wrote this book partly as a result of the popularity of a number of magazine and newspaper

¹⁴ Yokoyama will feature prominently in this study as one of the leading performer/transmitters of two of the three main lineages of the piece “*Reibo*”.

articles that he had written, including a series entitled *Take no oto kara* (竹の音から, 'From the Sound of Bamboo'), which was published from at least 1988 until 1990, in the *Nihon keizai shinbun* (日本経済新聞, 'Japan Financial Newspaper'), one of Japan's major newspapers (Yokoyama 1988-1990). These and other articles, together with the book *Shakuhachi gaku no miryoku*, probably makes Yokoyama the most widely published insider writing about the *shakuhachi*.

Mention should be made here of the two books by Nishiyama (1982a, 1982b). Though the books are about the *iemoto* or the Japanese music guild system in general, both contain sections specifically about the *shakuhachi* tradition as it relates to the *iemoto* system.

2.2.3 Scholarly Publications

In this thesis, all scholarly publications are considered as being written for outsiders to the tradition. By definition, scholarly writing is addressed to other scholars, who are insiders to their particular field, in this case musicology, but who are, for the most part, not insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition. Certain authors of scholarly articles, theses and other publications written in Japanese might, however, be considered insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition; since these scholars are particularly prolific in their publications on the *shakuhachi* tradition, they are considered by both members of the *shakuhachi* tradition and themselves to be "insiders" whose activities have had a significant role in the tradition. The most prolific of these authors are Tukitani and Kamisangô. On the other hand, until recently, scholarly articles and publications written in English were less likely to be of this type because of the author's lack of active participation and recognition within the *shakuhachi* tradition.

Although early examples of scholarly publications written in Japanese about the *shakuhachi* do exist, for example, Mikami's article on the Fuke sect (1902), it was in fact not until the late 1960s that the *shakuhachi* was deemed a worthy subject of research by Japan's community of musicologists. Moreover, musicology in general (including the study of European art music) has only recently become an acceptable area of study in Japan. As of 1990, Osaka University was the only major university (in contrast to universities of fine arts or music colleges, the Japanese equivalents of music conservatories) in Japan that had a chair or professorship in musicology. All other universities which offer courses on musicology rely on the expertise of visiting or part-time teachers, who are frequently from nearby fine arts universities or music conservatories.

With musicology being relegated to a comparatively low level of importance in Japanese universities, the study of Japanese music, or *hōgaku* (邦楽), has been afforded an even lower status, and is considered merely a specialized area within the domain of ethnomusicology, which in itself is a sub-branch of musicology. Furthermore, with certain exceptions such as Kamisangô and Tukitani, very few *hōgaku* specialists have concentrated upon the study of the *shakuhachi*. Indicative of the low regard most Japanese scholars have had for the *shakuhachi* is the contents of the book *Nihon ongaku no rekishi* (日本音楽の歴史, 'The History of Japanese

Music') (Kikkawa 1965). In this five hundred and twelve page volume, only one short (six page) section is devoted to the *hitoyogiri* (一節切, an obsolete type of *shakuhachi*), and less than ten brief references (each little more than a sentence or two) are devoted to all aspects of the *shakuhachi*. In contrast, numerous sections in many of the chronologically divided chapters are devoted to the *koto* and the *shamisen*.

Another indication of the quantity of *shakuhachi* research being undertaken in Japan is the *Ongakubunken yoshi mokuroku* (音楽文献要旨目録, 'Annotated Bibliography of Music Literature in Japan', published by the RILM National Committee of Japan). Between the years 1975 and 1989, (excluding 1977 and 1979), twelve volumes of the bibliography totaling 766 pages were published. Of these, 203 pages are devoted to Japanese music, which is divided into sixteen categories. The *shakuhachi* shares a category with *sōkyoku* (箏曲), *jiuta* (地歌), *kingaku* (琴楽) and *minshingaku* (明清楽). A total of 1,860 publications are listed under the sixteen Japanese music categories in the twelve volumes. Only 49 listings pertain to the *shakuhachi*.

The most prolific authors of scholarly publications on the *shakuhachi* as found in the *Ongakubunken yo-shi mokuroku* from 1976 until 1989 are Tukitani, Kamisangō and Iwata. For a more complete listing, please refer to the bibliography of this thesis. Among the authors of the *shakuhachi* listings in this important musicology bibliography are entries written by performers (e.g., Kawase and Kitahara), amateur *shakuhachi* enthusiasts or collectors such as Inagaki, graduate students (e.g., Tatsumi and Yukino) and scholars, such as Kikkawa, who are not insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition as defined in this study.

There are in fact only a few Japanese ethnomusicologists whose specialty is the *shakuhachi*. As mentioned above, the two most frequently cited names are Tukitani Tuneko and Kamisangō Yūkō. Of these, Tukitani is by far more prolific. Since writing her M.A. thesis on the *shakuhachi*, Tukitani has written nearly twenty articles. English translations of articles by her are to be published in the British journal "Contemporary Music Review" (Tukitani et al., 1991). Furthermore, unlike most *shakuhachi* scholars, Tukitani has dealt with the *shakuhachi* tradition as a whole rather than concentrating on a single lineage, music genre, or other aspect of the tradition.

Some of the scholarly articles and theses on the *shakuhachi* written in languages other than Japanese are also examples of this type of literature. Most authors of non-Japanese literature on the *shakuhachi* written before the mid-1970s (e.g., Malm 1959, Harich-Schneider 1973) were not insiders to the tradition. Not surprisingly, these sources contain numerous errors.

It is appropriate to elaborate on examples of these errors here because of the singular place both Malm's and Harich-Schneider's books have in both public and reference libraries throughout the English speaking world, as the sole general resources attempting to cover all of Japanese music and all of the history of Japanese music respectively. Malm's book in particular is usually the initial and frequently the only source referred to by a beginning student of any genre of Japanese music.

An example of such errors which occur in writing about the *shakuhachi* is a chart for notation symbols belonging to, according to Malm, “the three major schools”, which he lists as Meian (明暗) [also read Myôan], Kinko and Tozan (Malm 1959:270-271). In fact, these are names for three completely different entities. The first, Meian, a term given a variety of meanings, usually refers to the style of *honkyoku* performance more closely associated with the Kyôto and other “country” districts than with the Edo district. The second term, Kinko, denotes a number of “schools” which are completely separate organizations but partly share a common lineage back to a single founder. Only the third, Tozan, correctly identifies a single “school” in terms of a hierarchical organization.

There is an organization which is known as the Meian Taizan “school”, which is classified under the broader Meian style mentioned above. Malm confuses the issue, however, by giving as the notation system for the Meian school an old notation system (the *fu-ho-u* system) used today (and in the 1950s) by only a few individuals and groups within the Meian style.¹⁵ The Meian Taizan lineage uses a system similar to that of the Tozan *ryû*. The final complication occurs where Malm incorrectly gives the Meian symbol for the second finger hole position as □ (*ro*) rather than ホ (*ho*). The conspicuousness of this error is made apparent with the name of this notation system, called the *fu, ho, u* system after the symbols for the first three finger holes. Another similarly transparent, though less serious error is the reference to the book, *Gosenfu kara shakuhachifu no torikata* (五線譜から尺八譜のとり方) (Tanaka Inzan 1956). Malm states that the book “explains how to transcribe shakuhachi notation into Western script” (1959:284), yet the title of the book clearly translates as: ‘A Method of Obtaining Shakuhachi Notation from Staff Notation’, not the other way around.¹⁶

Other authors, including those writing after the mid-1970s (e.g., Berger 1969, Keeling 1975, Kudo 1977, Stanfield 1977, Tsuge [1977, 1982, 1983], Weisgarber 1968), participated in the *shakuhachi* tradition only temporarily and could be considered insiders only during their brief period of participation.

Articles in English which belong to this type of literature, insofar as the authors are insiders to the tradition, have been written by Blasdel (1981, 1984a, 1984b, 1988), Fritch (1978, 1979, 1983), Gutzwiller (1974, 1983, 1984, 1991), Lee (1974, 1976, 1980, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1991, 1992) and Howard (1991, 1992a, 1992b). English translations of articles on the *shakuhachi* in general and the *honkyoku* in particular, written in Japanese by Tukitani, Simura and Seyama (Tukitani, et al., ed. 1991), are soon to be published in the well-known British periodical, *Contemporary Music Review*. A major monograph written in German was published in 1983 (Gutzwiller 1983).

Two authors recently writing in English are Howard (1991, 1992a, 1992b) and Takahashi (1990). Howard makes use of his experience as a Zen Buddhist practitioner in articles about the connection between the *honkyoku* tradition and Zen. Takahashi, in his Ph.D. dissertation, presents major contributions to the literature available in English on the *shakuhachi*, particularly its history. Though his primary interest is in

¹⁵ The only “schools” to use this notation system today are the numerically tiny Chikuhô *ryû* and its even smaller offshoots.

¹⁶ See pp. [320-321](#) for a critique of Malm’s transcription and analysis of a *honkyoku*.

the Tozan *ryû* (which has no classical *honkyoku* in its repertoire), Takahashi does discuss and analyze a few *honkyoku*.

Finally, mention should be made of the numerous entries on *shakuhachi* in the two major reference works in Japanese on traditional Japanese music, *Hôgaku hyakka jiten* (邦楽百科辞典, ‘Encyclopedia of Traditional Japanese Music’, Kikkawa, ed. 1984) and *Nihon ongaku daijiten* (日本音楽大辞典, ‘Japanese Music Dictionary’, Hirano, et al., ed. 1989). Written primarily by Tukitani and Kamisangô, they therefore may be categorized as literature written by insiders for an outsider readership. Similar such entries can be found in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (v.9:532-534) and the *New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments* (v.3:357-360), though it could be argued that the authors, Berger and Hughes, are not insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition as defined by this thesis.

2.2.4 Non-scholarly Periodicals and Articles

As discussed above (see p.43), a number of periodicals about traditional Japanese music contain articles about the *shakuhachi* not written by musicologists. Though some appear to be written by *shakuhachi* players solely for other *shakuhachi* players, most of them are directed to a readership that includes outsiders such as *koto* and *shamisen* players as well. The names of these periodicals clearly suggest a readership beyond that of insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition. Articles about the *shakuhachi* in these periodicals will therefore be included in the second category of literature.

A major source of this type of *shakuhachi* literature was a periodical entitled *Sankyoku* (三曲, literally ‘Pieces for Three’). *Sankyoku* was published monthly from 1921 until 1944 by Fujita Reirô (藤田鈴朗). All forty-four issues were reprinted in 1976. As its name suggests, this publication concerned itself primarily, though not exclusively, with the ensemble music of the three instruments, *koto*, *shamisen* and *shakuhachi* and included articles on the activities of individuals and organizations, announcements and reviews of concerts and occasional scholarly articles. Outstanding among the contents of *Sankyoku* were the above mentioned (see p.44) series of articles by Nakatsuka (1936, 1939; reprinted in Hirano et al., 1979) which first presented his findings and theories on the *Kyotaku Denki*.

From 1944 until 1973, the periodical *Nihon ongaku* (日本音楽, *Japanese Music*) was published. The series was reprinted in 1983. *Kikan hôgaku* (季刊邦楽, ‘Traditional Japanese Music Quarterly’) is an important journal for traditional Japanese music, published quarterly since 1974, that regularly includes scholarly articles, interviews and essays on the *shakuhachi*. Volumes 5 (1975) and 10 (1977) were devoted entirely to the *shakuhachi*.

A monthly magazine entitled *Hôgaku* (邦楽, ‘Traditional Japanese Music’) that is very similar in content to the old *Sankyoku* has been published in Japan since 1987. Its focus, which includes all of the traditional Japanese music traditions, and potential readership is, however, greater than that of *Sankyoku*. Less scholarly than *Kikan*

hōgaku, *Hōgaku* regularly publishes articles specifically targeted at *shakuhachi* players, for example, detailed discussions of performance techniques.

Six issues of a periodical in English, also entitled *Hogaku* (邦楽), were published between 1983 and 1989 by a small group in New York City called “The Traditional Japanese Music Society”. Most issues contained at least one article about some aspect of the *shakuhachi* tradition. Many of the articles in the English language *Hogaku* are scholarly in style.

An extensive catalogue for *shakuhachi* instruments, accessories, sheet music, recordings and books has been published and widely distributed by Monty Levenson in Willits, California since the mid-1970s. Included in recent editions of the catalogue is one of the most extensive lists of *shakuhachi* teachers operating outside of Japan¹⁷. Levenson’s catalogue and his *shakuhachi* instruments are notable particularly in terms of transmission of the *shakuhachi* tradition to the West.

2.2.5 Beginner Manuals

Insofar as they are addressed to people who have no knowledge of the tradition, beginner manuals, of which there are many, could also be considered to belong to the second type of literature. Although it is debatable at what point a beginner becomes an insider, it is safe to say that beginner manuals are written by those who believe themselves to belong to the tradition, for readers who are not yet “insiders” but have the potential of becoming so.

There are numerous beginner manuals for the *shakuhachi* that are frequently called *tebiki* (手引, literally ‘hand pulling’). Every *shakuhachi ryū* publishes a beginner manual, such as the *Chikuho ryū no tebiki* (竹保流の手引, ‘Chikuho Ryū Beginner Manual’) (Chikuho ryū:1971). Such manuals are usually intended to be used by the beginning student when he first begins lessons with a teacher of a particular *ryū*. In addition, individual *shakuhachi* players also publish beginner manuals which, in contrast to the manuals published by the *ryū*, are usually intended to be used by those who do not want or do not have access to a teacher, as “teach yourself” material. One such manual, appropriately entitled “Easy Shakuhachi Primer” (やさしい尺八入門, *Yasashii shakuhachi nyūmon*) (Ishitaka 1977), attempts to instruct the beginner on the basics of *shakuhachi* playing using cartoons. Some manuals are geared specifically for enthusiasts of a particular genre of music, for example, *min’yō* (民謡, Japanese folk songs) or *enka* (演歌, popular love songs).

Since the mid-1970s, at least six publications for the beginning *shakuhachi* student who does not have ready access to a teacher have been published in English (Abbot 1980; Blasdel 1988; Deaver 1976; Grous 1978; Koga 1978; Neptune 1978; Taniguchi 1983). The most recent of these, *The Shakuhachi: A Manual for Learning* (Blasdel 1988) is the first to be published and distributed by a major publishing house. One half of the book is devoted to an English translation of a major scholarly article in Japanese (Kamisangō 1974) on the history of the *shakuhachi*. Because of these two

¹⁷ The 1993 catalogue listed 33 teachers.

factors, it became the first English language beginner's manual to be reviewed in the journal "Ethnomusicology" (Lee 1990:179-181).

2.2.6 Descriptive Notes Included in Commercial Recordings

Written with the insider in mind but read primarily by the outsider, LP, CD and cassette jacket notes are important sources of data on the *shakuhachi* tradition. In Japan there is a tradition of releasing double or triple albums of *shakuhachi* and other traditional Japanese music with extensive notes on the lineage/performer/history of the pieces in the recordings as well as on the *shakuhachi* tradition in general, frequently in the form of scholarly articles commissioned from noted ethnomusicologists or high ranking members of the tradition. Genealogies of and interviews with the performer(s), scores of the pieces in traditional *shakuhachi* notation and transcriptions of performances in staff notation are also commonly included. These notes are sometimes considered more valuable than the recordings themselves, the latter being purchased as much for the notes as for the performances.

Notable examples of recordings of classical *shakuhachi honkyoku* which include extensive written material are 尺八、神如道 (Shakuhachi, Jin Nyodô) (Jin 1980); *Suizen: Chikuho ryû ni miru fuke shakuhachi no keifu* (吹簫: 竹保流にみる 普化尺八の系譜, 'Blowing Zen: The Fuke Shakuhachi Lineage According to Chikuho Ryû', Sakai 1974); *Sangai rinten* (三界輪転, 'Three Worlds Rotation', Yokoyama 1980); *Shakuhachi koten/gendai besuto 30* (尺八古典/現代ベスト30, 'The Best 30 Shakuhachi Classical and Modern [Pieces]', descriptive notes edited by Hirano Kenji 1984); and *Kinko ryû shakuhachi honkyoku zenshû* (琴古流尺八本曲全集, 'Complete Works of the Shakuhachi Honkyoku of the Kinko School', Yamaguchi 1985). One recording with substantial descriptive notes in English is *Shakuhachi Honkyoku: Japanese Flute Played by Riley Kelly Lee* (Folkways Records 1980).

2.2.7 Concert Programme Notes

Finally, programme notes for the audiences of concerts and recitals also belong to this type of literature. Though by nature terse, programme notes frequently provide useful descriptions of pieces, biographical material on the performers and concise histories or general discussions of the repertoire. Furthermore, they give accurate indications of which pieces are popular at any given time. An example of particularly ample programme notes is the thirteen page booklet published for a concert produced by the *Hôgaku kanshō kai* (邦楽鑑賞会, 'Traditional Japanese Music Appreciation Society') on November 30, 1985 in Hiroshima, which included explanations of the pieces and a general article on the *shakuhachi* written by Tukitani.

2.3 Third Type of Literature: Authored by Outsiders for Insiders

Only two major types of literature may be categorized as being authored by outsiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition and written for insiders. These are modern compositions and government documents. Nonetheless, this category of literature plays an important role in the transmission of the *shakuhachi* tradition and the processes of change that occur within it.

2.3.1 Modern Compositions

Literature written by outsiders of the tradition for a readership that belongs to the tradition encompasses compositions for the *shakuhachi* written in staff notation by western trained composers who do not themselves perform on the instrument. There are, to my knowledge, very few examples of this type of composition from before the 1960s. Since then, their number and popularity have steadily increased. One of the earliest successful examples of this type of composition is *Chikurai Gosho* (竹籟五章, ‘Five Pieces for the “Wind in the Bamboo”’, i.e., the *shakuhachi*), written in 1964 by the western-trained composer, Moroi Makoto (諸井誠) (Moroi 1967). Takemitsu Tôru (武満徹) is perhaps the most well-known composer of works by an “outsider” for the *shakuhachi*. One of his works, a double concerto for *shakuhachi*, *biwa* and orchestra entitled “November Steps” (1967), has probably done more to introduce the two traditional Japanese instruments to more people outside Japan than any other single thing or activity. Because these compositions influence people outside the tradition, they exert more influence on the tradition than compositions written in traditional *shakuhachi* notation by members of the *shakuhachi* tradition.¹⁸ In a forthcoming special issue of the British “Contemporary Music Review” devoted entirely to the *shakuhachi*, a comprehensive list of American and British compositions for *shakuhachi* will be included.

2.3.2 Government Documents

Other examples of this type of literature are the edicts and other communications written by the Japanese government and addressed to members of the *shakuhachi* tradition. Especially important are numerous documents addressed to the Fuke sect by the Edo military government. These documents are concerned with giving the sect a legal monopoly over the use of the *shakuhachi*, and other privileges, in exchange for the acceptance and enforcement of certain conditions (see Chapter 3, p.162). A number of documents were written by the government and addressed to the Fuke sect regarding the enforcement of the conditions demanded of the sect. The counterparts to these government documents, written by the officials of the Fuke sect and addressed to the government, belong to the second type of literature, written by insiders for outsiders (see above, pp.44-45). Both types of documents are invaluable in the study of the history of the *shakuhachi* tradition during that period.

¹⁸ See Lee (1987:71-79) regarding the many effects staff notation has on the *shakuhachi* tradition.

According to Kamisangô (1974:19), in 1847, the government wrote to the Fuke sect asking, “The playing of *shakuhachi* with *shamisen* and *koto* occurs; is this all right with the temples?” The temples’ unambiguous reply was “It is deplorable and very bothersome.” An earlier reply by the Fuke temples to a similar question by the government was more resigned in tone: “It really was something which should not be done. The people are misbehaving, but they are doing it privately. We cannot hear it, so we cannot say whether it is good or bad” (Kamisangô 1974:19). From these documents and the rather evasive replies made by the Fuke sect, it is evident that secular ensemble playing took place at that time, even though *shakuhachi* was supposed to be used solely within the spiritual context of *honkyoku* performance. Kamisangô (1974:19) mentions another telling government document addressed to the Fuke sect, dated 1774, which states that severe steps would be taken by the authorities if the sect did not control the extortionists and law breakers who hid behind the guise of the *komusô*. These and numerous other government documents give a sense of realism to the idealized picture of the *shakuhachi*-playing Zen Buddhist sect painted by such documents as the previously mentioned *Kyotaku denki kokujiikai*.

2.4 Fourth Literature Type: By Outsiders for Outsiders

The final type of literature, written by outsiders for outsiders is the least common type. By definition, literature of this type has little effect upon the transmission of the *shakuhachi* tradition, especially at the time it is written. Its usefulness in studies such as this thesis, arise from the indication it gives of how the tradition is viewed by outsiders and how the tradition functions within society at large.

2.4.1 Historical Sources

There are relatively few primary sources on the *shakuhachi* dating earlier than the late 1700s; most of these are, however, of the fourth type of literature. These include brief mentions of the instrument in official lists, and short entries in personal diaries or commentaries. Kamisangô refers to the majority of these sources in his comprehensive histories of early *shakuhachi* developments (1974, 1977). For example, a government report entitled *Dajôkanfu* (太政官符) written in 809 lists among the court musicians of the time, one *shakuhachi* player. The books *Kojidan* (古事談, 1215) and *Taigenshō* (体源抄, 1512) both state that the noted Buddhist priest Jikaku Taishi Ennin (慈覚大師円仁), upon his return from China in 847 played the *shakuhachi* instead of chanting. Other primary sources of this type are treated in Chapter 3 in the discussion of the historical background of the *shakuhachi*.

2.4.2 Scholarly Publications

Many of the scholarly publications on the *shakuhachi*, particularly those in English, are written by outsiders for a readership of outsiders. As mentioned above (p.[51](#)), the substantial entries on the *shakuhachi* under the heading “Japan” in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (v.9:532-534), and in the *New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments* (v.3:357-360) are written by Berger and Hughes, English speaking ethnomusicologists whose areas of expertise include Japan, but who are not insiders to the *shakuhachi* tradition. In addition, the many references to the *shakuhachi* in the monumental work *A History of Japanese Music* (Harich-Schneider 1973) are written by an outsider to be read predominantly by outsiders. *Shakuhachi Zen, the Fukeshû and Komusô* (Sanford 1977) is another example of this category of literature.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF *SHAKUHACHI* AND *HONKYOKU*

Throughout history, a number of reedless, end-blown bamboo flutes with from five to as many as nine fingerholes have appeared in Japan. Made from pieces of bamboo of varying lengths having one, three, or more nodes, they are all thought of as belonging to the same family of instruments, that is the *shakuhachi*. The mouthpiece in all the Japanese end-blown flutes is made by first cutting the bamboo perpendicular to the pipe at a node or joint of the bamboo and then further cutting a small, wedge shaped piece from one side of the end, that is obliquely, but outwards, thus forming the blowing edge ([Illustration 1](#)). Though the blowing edge of one of the end-blown flutes, the *tempuku* (天吹, see below), differs slightly from the other flutes in that it is much smaller and shallower and filed inward toward the bore, it is characteristically cut outward as well. It is primarily because of the distinctive shape of their mouthpieces that these instruments are classified as a single family of flutes.

According to Tukitani et al., (1991:1), there are no other examples of the outward facing type of blowing edge found anywhere in the world, including China. In contrast to the Japanese end-blown flutes with the blowing edge bevelled outward, other end-blown flutes have a blowing edge that is either merely cut perpendicularly (e.g., nose flutes), or that is rounded slightly at the perpendicular cut (e.g., the *nei* and the *kaval*). The flutes most closely resembling the *shakuhachi* such as the present-day Chinese *dongxiao* (洞簫, Japanese: *dôsho*), are made by cutting or shaving the pipe towards the inside of the bore rather than towards the outside.

Japanese bamboo flutes have been given various names. Each of these names has been applied to slightly different instruments at different points in their history. Generally speaking, the term *shakuhachi* has been used as a generic term to denote all of the end-blown flutes of Japan. In addition, the term *hitoyogiri* (一節切, literally ‘cut from one node’) has been used since the 17th century (Tukitani et al. 1991:3) to denote a *shakuhachi* made from a piece of bamboo with only one node and with five fingerholes, and the term *tempuku*, (see above) denotes a very small *shakuhachi* (approx. 28 cm. in length) that has three nodes, five fingerholes and a very shallow blowing edge.

The way these and other terms have been applied is, however, arbitrary and at times contradictory or confusing. This will be discussed in more detail below (pp.[86-102](#)).

Illustration 1 Blowing edges for shakuhachi,
hitoyogiri, tempuku, dongxiao, and tanteki

写真 3

一節切
義弘公



天吹
有川氏



天吹
大田氏



天吹
忠義公



Hitoyogiri

古代尺八



Tempuku

普化尺八



Tempuku

洞簫



Tempuku

短簫



Shōshin
shakuhachi



Fuke shakuhachi



dongxiao



Tanteki

(in Tempuku, p.86)

3.1 The *Shakuhachi* of the Nara (646-794) and Heian (794-1185) Periods

The history of *shakuhachi* in Japan dates back to the latter half of the seventh century, when the *shakuhachi* and other musical instruments were brought from China to become part of a court ensemble fashioned after that of the Tang dynasty. The music of this court ensemble became known in Japan as *gagaku* (雅楽) and was only one of many elements of the Chinese culture that were adopted by the Japanese during this and later times. According to the Tang dynasty document *Jiu Tang shu* (旧唐書, Japanese: *Kutôjo*, ‘Old Tang History’, the older of two major histories of the Tang dynasty), the flute with the outward facing blowing edge was invented by the person Lucun (呂才, Japanese: Ryosai) between 627 and 649 A.D. (Kamisanô 1974:10, Ueno 1984:46, Tukitani et al. 1991:1). It is probable that an instrument of this type was introduced into Japan with the *gagaku* ensemble and remained a part of that ensemble for several centuries. Therefore, the *shakuhachi* of the Nara and Heian periods are generally known as *gagaku shakuhachi*. It was performed for, and frequently by, the nobility of ancient Japan from the time of their introduction from China until at least the 12th century.

3.1.1 *Shakuhachi* of the Shôsôin and Hôryûji

Eight specimens of *gagaku shakuhachi* have been preserved in the Shôsôin (正倉院), a repository built in 756 for the treasures of Tôdaiji, an important temple in Nara housing the *daibutsu* (大仏, ‘great Buddha’), the largest statue of Buddha in Japan inside a building, completed in 749.¹⁹ Four of these flutes are recorded in *Tôdaiji kenmotsu chô* (東大寺獻物帳, 758) (Ueno 1984:9), a catalogue of the items that had belonged to Emperor Shômu (聖武天皇, r.724-749) donated to Tôdaiji in 756 by Empress Kômyô (光明皇后) after the death of her husband. These flutes were gifts from a king of the Paekche Kingdom of mid-8th century Korea. A catalogue dating from that time states that Emperor Shômu had been particularly fond of the four instruments (Harich-Schneider 1973:59). In view of what is known about *shakuhachi* of this period, it is possible that the remaining four flutes were also imported into Japan, but this cannot be concluded with certainty.

Of the eight *shakuhachi* in the Shôsôin collection, only five are made of bamboo. The remaining three flutes are made of jade, ivory and stone. One of the bamboo flutes and the stone flute are completely covered with delicate patterns carved on their surfaces. All but one of the instruments are quite playable, with the jade instrument said to be especially so (Harich-Schneider 1973:61). The jade, stone and ivory flutes are carved to imitate the nodes of bamboo.

¹⁹ It is highly likely that the *shakuhachi* was used in the “Eye Opening Ceremony” of the Great Buddha (大仏開眼会, *daibutsu kaigen e*) in 752. Unfortunately the records of the event (in the *Tôdaiji yôroku* 東大寺要録) do not detail the actual instrumentation of the music ensemble used.

Whereas *shakuhachi* from around the 14th century until the present time have only five fingerholes, and a variable number of nodes, all of the flutes preserved in Shôsôin have six fingerholes and three nodes, not counting the uppermost node on which the blowing edge is cut. Although a number of hypotheses concerning the extra fingerhole of the *shakuhachi* of the Nara period have been put forward, the reason for the difference in the number of fingerholes between the *gagaku shakuhachi* and later *shakuhachi* has never been conclusively shown (see below).

The lengths of the flutes in the Shôsôin vary from 437mm. to 343.5mm and the diameters of their bores vary from 12mm. to 16mm.²⁰ A more detailed description of these flutes and their measurements can be found in the book *Shôsôin no gakki* (正倉院の楽器, ‘*The Musical Instruments of Shôsôin*’, 1967). Though pitches obtained by playing each instrument have also been recorded, the data cannot be regarded as definitive because it is not known how the instruments were originally played. Reconstructing the performance practices of the *gagaku shakuhachi* and the pitches used by the performers at the time is particularly problematic due to the variability of pitch production possible with the *shakuhachi* mouthpiece.

Finally, a ninth specimen of the *gagaku shakuhachi* of similar date to those preserved in the Shôsôin is on permanent loan to the Tokyo National Museum from the Nara temple, Hôryûji (法隆寺). Made of bamboo and similar in proportions to the Shôsôin *shakuhachi*, the Hôryûji *shakuhachi* also has six holes. A commonly told legend is that this instrument was used by Shôtoku Taishi (聖徳太子, 574-622), the founder of Hôryûji and the first princely patron of Buddhism in Japan. Furthermore, the 13th-century book *Zoku kyôkunshô* (續教訓抄) written by Koma no Asakuzu (狛朝葛) in 1270, and the *Taigenshō* (體源鈔), an authoritative reference on Japanese music written in 1512 by Toyohara no Muneaki (豊原統秋), both state that Prince Shôtoku used the instrument to perform the piece “*Somakusha*” (蘇莫者) to accompany the dance of a celestial maiden who had appeared before him (Kurihara 1918:36-41; Ueno 1984:39). There is no factual basis for either the legend or the written account (Kamisanô 1974:10; Ueno 1984:39).²¹ The association of Prince Shôtoku and the *shakuhachi* is an example of the frequent occurrence of important historical figures having been given central roles in their origin myths, in traditional Japanese musical genres and other traditional Japanese arts.

The *shakuhachi* instruments preserved in the Shôsôin repository and by Hôryûji are the only extant instruments of their type in the world and are therefore of great value. Unfortunately, no documents such as manuscripts, treatises or musical notation for the *gagaku shakuhachi* survive from the Nara and Heian periods. Besides the actual instruments themselves, the only additional data are mentions of the instrument in a few lists and government reports, and some pictorial evidence showing its use.

²⁰ In contrast, the standard dimensions of the modern *shakuhachi* are 545.4mm in length with a bore diameter ranging approximately from 15mm to 21mm, that is, greater in both length and bore diameter than the Shôsôin flutes.

²¹ Kamisanô (1974:10) quotes *Kyôkunshô* instead of *Zoku Kyôkunshô*. Also, according to Tsukitani, Harich-Schneider’s reading “Sumiaki” (1973:714) is incorrect.

3.1.2 Pictorial and Written Evidence of the Nara and Heian *Shakuhachi*

According to Gutzwiller (1974:6), an acquisition list at Hôryûji includes several *shakuhachi* among a set of instruments purported to have been brought from China to Nara during the reign of the Chinese Emperor Wen (r. 581-604). The records of the dedication of the Shôsôin, written in 756, list the extant *shakuhachi* preserved in the depository, mentioned above. Also, the *Saidaiji shizai chô* (西大寺資材帳), another list of instruments imported from Tang China written in 780, record a single patterned bamboo *shakuhachi* (斑竹尺八) and eight other *shakuhachi* (Kurihara 1918:48). Gutzwiller (1974:7) points out that the *shakuhachi* mentioned in the Hôryûji and Saidaiji lists are clearly of Chinese origin. In addition the Shôsôin instruments that are made of ivory and jade, and possibly the bamboo ones as well, were also most probably imported into Japan either directly from China or via Korea.

A representation of the *gagaku shakuhachi* being played can be seen on one of the panels of a large bronze temple lantern made around 752 which is prominently located in the centre of the open courtyard in front of the steps leading to the main entrance of the Hall of the Great Buddha (東大寺) in Nara. Each panel on the lantern depicts a Bodhisattva dancing or playing a musical instrument amidst swirling clouds

The Shôsôin repository also contains pictorial evidence of the *shakuhachi* from the Nara era. In the collection of articles donated by Emperor Shômu is a *dankyû* (弾弓), a longbow made of bamboo said to be of Japanese manufacture and dated 730. Realistic figures of musicians, dancers and other performers are painted on the bow. On the lower end of the bow, together with twenty-eight other figures, is a dancing man playing a wind instrument which, according to Harich-Schneider (1973:55) is “held vertically like a *hichiriki* (篳篥) or a *shakuhachi*”. The length of the instrument being played (the bottom end is nearly at waist level) and the angle at which it is being held suggest that it is a *shakuhachi* rather than a *hichiriki*, or the longer and now obsolete *ôhichiriki* (大篳篥). The fact that the figure is dancing might, however, indicate that the instrument being played is a *hichiriki*, as the mouthpiece of the *shakuhachi* would make simultaneous dancing and playing extremely difficult. There is no way of knowing with certainty what instrument is in the drawing.

On the upper part of the bow, near the middle, is a group of nine musicians, eight of whom are squatting or sitting cross-legged. One of the musicians is playing what seems to be a *shakuhachi*. It is interesting to note that the *shakuhachi* player is the only one sitting in the *seiza* (正座) position. Though *seiza* is the customary and most formal way of sitting on the floor in Japan today, in the *gagaku* ensemble tradition, almost all of the musicians customarily sit cross-legged or squat rather than sit *seiza*. Finally, a standing performer of a *shakuhachi*-like vertical wind instrument can be seen on the longbow (Ueno 1984:125). The musician is dressed in the same Chinese manner as the seated musician, wearing robes and headgear that were fashionable during the early Heian period or earlier (Harich-Schneider 1973:142).

The musicians, dancers, acrobats and other performers painted on the *dankyû* illustrate two forms of secular music of the Nara period, namely *gigaku* (伎楽) and *sangaku* (散楽). *Gigaku* was a masked dance form accompanied by drum, gong and flute, originating in South China and developed by Mimashi (味摩之), an important figure in ancient Japanese music, who was from Kudara (百濟), a kingdom of the Korean peninsula (HHJ 1984:269). *Sangaku* refers to miscellaneous public entertainment including acrobatic dances imported from Tang China and popular in Japan from the Heian through the Kamakura periods (HHJ 1984:442).

The following pictorial evidence clearly illustrates the part the *shakuhachi* played in both sacred and secular music during the Nara period and later ([Illustration 2](#)).

Another iconographic source from the Nara-Heian period is a scroll entitled *Shinzei Nyûdô kogaku zu* (信西入道古楽図, 'Shinzei Nyûdô Ancient Music Drawings'). It contains the oldest and most complete drawings of *bugaku* (舞楽, dances associated with the court), *sarugaku* (猿楽, a popular drama related to *sangaku* and an antecedent to *nô* drama) and acrobatic acts that were a popular part of court entertainment during the Heian period, and the musical instruments that accompanied them (Harich-Schneider 1973:142). Shinzei, the Buddhist name of Fujiwara no Michinori (藤原通憲, d. 1160), amassed a large collection of historical material of all sorts. Though the precise role played by Prince Shinzei in compiling the material in the *Kogaku zu* is not known, the sources used by the creators of the scroll date from the Nara or the early Heian period. These sources include the Nara *dankyû*, discussed above.

The original of the *Shinzei kogaku zu* scroll no longer survives but at least five copies exist, including one in the Tôkyô National Museum and another dating from 1449 (HHJ 1984:548) in possession of the Tôkyô University of Fine Arts. There are fourteen illustrations of musicians each playing a different instrument, the names of which are clearly labeled. Eight illustrations closely resemble drawings found on the Nara *dankyû*, one being a kneeling *shakuhachi* player

Illustration 2
Pictorial evidence from Nara-Heian periods



From Shinzei Nyūdō kogaku zu



From Shinzei Nyūdō kogaku zu

Illustrated Dankyū (longbow)

(In Kurihara 1918:57, Ueno 1984:75, 125)

(Harichi-Schneider 1973:148). Finally, the *shakuhachi* can be seen in a drawing of an ensemble of ten musicians and flag bearers (Harich-Schneider 1973:171). This illustration is of interest because the *shakuhachi* player is standing, in contrast to the kneeling position shown in almost all of the previously mentioned illustrations ([Illustration 2](#)).

In addition to these iconographic data, a number of written sources survive. On March 21, 809, twenty-nine years after the Saidaiji list was compiled and well into the early Heian period, a government report states that there was to be one *shakuhachi* musician among the twelve official musicians of the court. A similar report dating September 23, 848, states that the number of *shakuhachi* players was to be reduced from three to two. Both reports are reproduced in full in Kurihara (1918:50-52). This is the last documented mention of official *shakuhachi* musicians as part of the official court ensemble. The ensemble was in fact radically changed around the time of Emperor Nimmyô (仁明天皇, 833-850) (Kikkawa 1965:63). The 848 government document proves that the *shakuhachi* survived at least until then.

Thereafter the *shakuhachi* continues to be mentioned infrequently in court contexts, though not specifically as an instrument used in the *gagaku* ensemble. The book *Ryûmeishô* (龍鳴抄, 1133, a comprehensive treatise on the *ryûteki*) states that the fourth son of Emperor Seiwa (清和天皇 r.858-876), Nangû Sadayasu *no* Shinnô (南宮貞保親王 870-924)²² transcribed or reconstructed the *tôgaku* (唐樂)²³ piece “Ôshôkun” (王昭君) from *shakuhachi* notation to *ôteki* (横笛, read *ôjô* in the Heian period; a traverse flute) notation (Kurihara 1918:52-53). This event is subsequently recorded in the *Taigenshō* (體源鈔), an authoritative reference on Japanese music written in 1512. The *Taigenshō* also states that Sadayasu was one of the five best flute players (Toyohara 1933:561). Finally, the *Zoku yôkunshō* (1270) states that Sadayasu played the *shakuhachi* (Kurihara 1918:53). These three sources strongly suggest that the *shakuhachi* was still very much associated with the musical tradition of the court at least up until the late 9th or early 10th century. Evidence suggesting that the *shakuhachi* was used in the court beyond that time is given below.

Another reference of this same period is the well-known *Tale of Genji* (源氏物語), a “novel” written around the beginning of the 11th century by Lady Murasaki Shikibu. In Chapter 6, “The Safflower”, Lady Murasaki mentions the playing of the “*sakuhachi* (sic) *no fue*” (さくはちの笛, ‘sakuhachi flute’) (Yamada 1934:179), indicating that the instrument could still be heard within the courtly circles of late Heian period.

²² Sadayasu is mistakenly read Teihô by Gutzwiller (1974:8).

²³ Literally “Tang music”, *tôgaku* is a type of court music imported from Tang China during the Nara and early Heian periods. From the middle of the Heian period *tôgaku* referred to music originally from China that had become Japanese in flavour, in contrast to music from Korea known as *komagaku*.

Imagakami (今鏡), a collection of historical stories written in 1170 by Fujiwara no Tametsune (藤原為経, entered the priesthood in 1143) (Ueno 1984:119) mentions that towards the end of the Heian era, in the year 1158, Emperor Go-Shirakawa (後白河天皇) commanded that for the New Year's celebration an attempt be made to revive the *shakuhachi* (Kamisanō 1974:10; Tukitani et al. 1991:3). This incident is also mentioned in *Zoku kyōkunshō* (1270) (Kurihara 1918:57). A third reference to Go-Shirakawa's request for *shakuhachi* music, found in *Taigenshō* (1512), states that at the time, the *shakuhachi* "was played long ago, but not recently". Upon Emperor Go-Shirakawa's request, the son of the commander of the Left Guards played the instrument using old notation (Toyohara 1933:629).

This incident is particularly significant because it indicates the *shakuhachi* had fallen into disuse by the mid 12th century, and that a royal request was required for it to be revived. It is interesting to note that old notations for the *shakuhachi* were used for the revival. One may conclude from this event that even though the instrument was in need of reviving, it had not been totally abandoned and forgotten by the nobility of Japan in the year 1158. This, however, is the last documentary record of *shakuhachi* performance within the context of the Japanese court.

The reason the *shakuhachi* was excluded from the official list of *gagaku* instruments sometime after the mid-9th century is unknown. Harich-Schneider (1973:131) suggests that *shakuhachi* was eliminated from court music early on in favour of the transverse bamboo flute (*yokobue*, *ōteki*, *ryūteki*), "the volume of which matched the other instrumental groups better". She further suggests that the above-mentioned Prince Sadayasu (see p.70) initiated this elimination (1973:195). More likely, the *gagaku shakuhachi* may have fallen into disuse, together with other instruments such as the *u* (竽, a large *sho* 笙) and the *ōhichiriki* (大篳篥, a large *hichiriki*), as part of a general change in the instrumentation of the *gagaku* ensemble that took place in the 9th century (Kikkawa 1965:63; Kamisanō 1974:10).

The reduction in the number of musical instruments in the *gagaku* ensemble may have been a practical and/or economical decision. Contact between Japan and the mainland virtually ceased during this period, after which the music ensembles of the court became self-reliant and had fewer instruments (Kikkawa 1965:61-62). Additionally, the late Heian court simply may not have had the resources needed to maintain a court ensemble as large as had been originally imported from China.

Kikkawa (1965:61-64) states that the elimination of some of the instruments used in the court ensemble was primarily due to the music played. Modes were changed to suit Japanese aesthetics, which, of course, are uniquely different from the aesthetics of the mainland courts.

Whatever the reason the instrument was eliminated from the roles of the court musicians, in the Kamakura (鎌倉) or Minamoto (源) era, only sixty years after the last documented performance within the court, the *shakuhachi* once again surfaces in historical sources.

3.2 The *Shakuhachi* of the Middle Ages (1185-1600)

Historical references (see below) suggest that at least from the early 13th century, the *shakuhachi* was performed by commoners, and was also associated with the performance of *sarugaku*. In the mid-14th century it was still being played, however, by at least one member of a palace musician family and, as late as the early 15th century, a member of the royal family was playing the instrument. In the early 15th century, it was used in the courts in performing *sôga* (早歌, vocal music of the period).

The first mention of the *shakuhachi* in the Kamakura era (1185-1333) is in Koma no Chikazane's (狛近眞) book, *Kyôkunshô* (1233). We are told that at the time of writing, the instrument was played by *mekura hôshi* (盲法師, blind priests), and as accompaniment to *sarugaku*. Chikazane refers to the *shakuhachi* as *tanteki* (短笛, 'short flute'). This is the first reference to the *shakuhachi* being used by commoners outside the context of Imperial courts. It is no longer an instrument solely of the Japanese aristocracy, though the *shakuhachi* continues to be played by the nobility for at least two more centuries (Kurihara 1918:; Kamisangô 1974:10; Ueno 1984:121; Tukitani et al., 1991:4).

Between the latter 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century there is very little mention of the *shakuhachi*. According to Ueno (1984:140), virtually all that can be said about the instrument in the 14th century is that one of the four families of palace musicians, the Toyohara family (豊原家) appears to have taken over the instrument. Toyohara no Muneaki wrote in *Taigenshō* that his ancestor Toyohara no Kazuaki (豊原量秋, d.1441), was skilful at the *shakuhachi* (Toyohara 1933:629).

The *Yoshino shûi* (吉野拾遺, 'Gleanings of Yoshino', 1358), a record of events that occurred during the brief Imperial court of Emperor Go-Daigo (後醍醐) in the Yoshino mountains, states that a son of Emperor Go Daigo, Prince Kanenaga Shinnô (懷良親王) played the *shakuhachi* well (Kurihara 1918:60). This suggests that the instrument was still popular with at least one of the nobility in the mid-14th century, exactly two hundred years after the last performance in the contexts of the court documented in *Taigenshō*. The type of music either Toyohara no Kazuaki or Prince Kanenaga played and the context of their performances are unknown.

Half a century later, the diary *Yamashina no Noritoki Kyô* (山科教言郷日記) states that on the 24th of March, 1408, Emperor Go-Komatsu (後小松) was entertained by a *shakuhachi* ensemble playing *sôga* (Kamisangô 1974:10, Ueno 1984:141).

The *shakuhachi* was a favourite instrument with performers of *dengaku* (田楽, literally 'field music'), a popular genre of entertainment dance and music between the 14th and 16th centuries. The association between *dengaku* and the *shakuhachi* is mentioned in the *Taigenshō* (Toyohara 1933:629): "In the house of Toyohara, Kazuaki (the author's great-grandfather) excelled in the *shakuhachi* (see above, p.73). He was a student of Toyohara no Atsuaki (豊原敦秋) of the collateral family line, as was Zoami (15th c.) the *dengaku* performer. Now, there is no truth behind what *dengaku* players say when speaking of the *shakuhachi* being their own instrument..."

(translation by Blasdel 1988:78). Kamisangô notes that this passage suggests that both members of the *gagaku* tradition, such as Kazuaki, and *dengaku* musicians valued the *shakuhachi* to the point of disputing ownership of the instrument (1974:10).

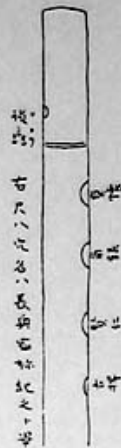
The first graphic representations of a *shakuhachi* in which the number of fingerholes are clearly indicated do not appear until 1512, in the authoritative music encyclopedia, *Taigenshō*. These sketches are in fact the first indication of the number of fingerholes and nodes in the bamboo since the preserved Nara period instruments mentioned above. There are seven simple sketches of the instrument in *Taigenshō*. One sketch clearly shows the four front and one back hole, with each fingerhole given a name ([Illustration 3](#)). Though the sketch ends before showing the bottom of the instrument, only one node of the bamboo can be seen in the drawing. The *shakuhachi* illustrated in *Taigenshō* are therefore different from the *gagaku shakuhachi* preserved in Shōsōin and Hōryūji both in the number of fingerholes and bamboo nodes, the latter having six fingerholes and three bamboo nodes.

Five different lengths of *shakuhachi* are illustrated in *Taigenshō*. In the book, these lengths are associated with the pitches *hyōjō* (平調, E); *sōjō* (雙調, G); *ōshiki* (黃鐘調, A); *banshiki* (盤渉調, B); and *ichikotsu* (壹越調, D).

Another drawing of the *shakuhachi* of this period can be found in the book *Nanajūichiban shokunin uta awase* (七十一番職人歌合, ‘A Collection of Seventy-one Craftsmen’s Songs’), written by Tosa no Mitsunobu (土佐光信) sometime between 1504 and 1521. This picture depicts what is called a *biwa hōshi* (琵琶法師, a *biwa*-playing priest, typically blind) performing in the usual kneeling position ([Illustration 4](#)). In front of him on the ground can be seen his wooden clogs and walking staff, a set of panpipes and a *shakuhachi* (Ueno 1984:148). The *biwa hōshi* are most famous for their performances during the Kamakura era of the epic tales of the *Heike monogatari* (平家物語), and may have used the *shakuhachi* as preludes or interludes to their recitation of the Heike stories.

As was the case with the 13th century reference in *Kyōkunshō*, the *shakuhachi* is here not being played by a person of noble birth, as was the case of the *gagaku shakuhachi*, but rather by a member of one of the lowest classes of Japanese society, blind beggar priests.

Illustration 3
Drawing of five hole shakuhachi in Taigensho



(In Ueda 1984:129)

Illustration 4
Biwa hoshi with shakuhachi



From Nanajūichiban shokunin uta ewase

(In Ueda 1984:149)

3.2.1 Literary References to the *Shakuhachi* in the Middle Ages

There are several references to the *shakuhachi* in collections of poetry written during the 15th and 16th centuries. The poet Ikkyû Zenji (一休禪師, 1394-1482), whose relationship with Buddhism and the *shakuhachi* will be discussed below, frequently refers to the *shakuhachi* in his poetry. In one of his *waka* (和歌), Ikkyû writes:

Shakuhachi wa hito yo to koso omoishi ni
Ikuyo ka oi no yo to nariken
「尺八はひとよとこそ思ひしに
幾夜か老いの友となりけん」
Even though I thought the shakuhachi a friend just
for one night,
It has remained my friend many nights into old age

(Kamisanô 1974:12)

In this poem, the term *hitoyogiri* appears to be alluded to, though not actually used, in a clever word play making use of the two meanings of “hitoyo”: “one night” (一夜), and the instrument *hitoyogiri* (一節切, cut from one [bamboo] node). The actual term *hitoyogiri* first appeared in a collection of songs, *Ryûtsu bushi* (隆達節, 1593) (Tukitani et al. 1991:4). Collected by Takasabu Ryûtsu (高三隆達), the collection is also known as *Ryûtsu kouta* (隆達小唄). The poem in Ryûtsu’s *kouta* (小唄), short songs usually accompanied by the three-stringed instrument the *shamisen* (三味線), uses the same word play as that of Ikkyû, but in a more romantic sense:

Shakuhachi no hitoyogiri koso ne mo yokere
Kimi to hito yo wa ne mo taranu
「尺八のひとよぎりこそ音もよけれ
君とひとよは寝も足らぬ」
The tones of the shakuhachi ‘*hitoyogiri*’
may satisfy for one night,
But sleeping with you just one night is not enough

(Kamisanô 1974:12, translation by Blasdel 1988:86).

The *shakuhachi* is featured in another earlier collection of poetry of the period, the *Kangin shû* (閑吟集, 1518). The poems in this collection are the lyrics of songs of the period, mostly *kouta*. The editor of the collection writes in his preface that the *shakuhachi* is his friend (Kamisanô 1974:11; Ueno 1984:173). One of the poems in *Kangin shû* suggests the playing of the *shakuhachi* as a meditation, a function common throughout much of its history:

I take out the shakuhachi from
 beneath my sleeve,
to blow it while waiting and
The wind through the pine-
scatters flowers as though a dream
How much longer will I have to play
 until my heart is quiet again?

(Translated by Frank Hoff, in Blasdel 1988:81)

Two other poems in *Kangin shû* use the *shakuhachi* with two universal themes:

177 *Kouta*

My shakuhachi is blameless yet
I toss it at the pillow.
It makes a sound *katari* as it hits
 the wood rim,
Yet even the sound does not make it less
 lonely nor less sad
to sleep alone.

276 *Kouta*

I blow you while I wait
I blow you later in my disappointment too-
Worthless Shakuhachi!

(Translated by Frank Hoff, in Blasdel 1989:81)

Other references to the *shakuhachi* during this period in Japanese history will be discussed separately in the following section as evidence of the connection between the *shakuhachi* and Buddhism.

3.2.2 The *Shakuhachi* and Buddhism in the Middle Ages

Although few specifics are known about the *shakuhachi* between the 13th and 16th centuries, evidence of the instrument's association with Buddhism, especially Zen Buddhism, can already be detected during this period. One of the earliest references to this association is found in the book *Kojidan* (古事談, 1215), and is repeated in *Taigenshō* three centuries later (Kurihara 1918:53-54; Kamisangō 1974:10). Both state that the Buddhist priest Jikaku Taishi Ennin (慈覚大使円仁, 794-864), who is credited with bringing the *shōmyō* (声明) chant of the Tendai (天台) sect from China, performed the chant “Inzei no Amida kyo” (引声の阿弥陀経) on the *shakuhachi* due to a weak voice. Harich-Schneider (1973:315) also states that Ennin “used the practical method of playing Chinese hymns on a *shakuhachi* in order to transmit the melodies correctly”, but does not specify her source. Kamisangō (1974:10) points out

that though there is no proof of Jikaku Ennin actually doing this, inasmuch as both references to him were written well after he lived, the fact of an early association existing between the *shakuhachi* and Buddhism cannot be denied.

In this context, it should be noted again that in *Taigenshō* we are told that Toyohara no Kazuaki (量秋, d.1441), the great-great grandfather of the author of *Taigenshō*, was a skilled *shakuhachi* player. Kazuaki's teacher, Toyohara no Atsuaki (豊原敦秋), also taught Zōami (増阿弥, ca.1400) (Kamisanō 1974:10), a central figure in the development of *nō* drama who was strongly influenced by Zen Buddhism. Although this is only indirect evidence of the connection between Buddhism and the *shakuhachi*, it does suggest the pervasive influence Buddhism has had for centuries on many of the performing arts in Japan, of which the *shakuhachi* is one.

A very important historical figure of the time who had a much more apparent connection with the *shakuhachi* is the Zen priest, Ikkyū, mentioned above in his capacity as a poet. Ikkyū clearly states in his poetry, in particular in the collection *Kyōunshū* (狂雲集), the role of the *shakuhachi* in a spiritual context as an instrument “that urges cognition” (Blasdel 1984:215). Himself enlightened by sound (in this case the call of a crow), he seemed to have had difficulty communicating to others the enlightening quality of sound in the *shakuhachi*. In the last line of one poem, he lamented, “No one understands the wondrous tone of the *shakuhachi*”. In another called “*Shakuhachi*”, he referred to himself as a barbarian blowing fruitlessly on his flute (Blasdel 1984:216). The following is one of Ikkyū's poems about an earlier *shakuhachi*-playing priest named Tonami:

The incomparable Tonami, who roams the heavens and
the earth
Playing the *shakuhachi*; one feels the unseen worlds
In all the universe there is only this song
Our flute player pictured here.

(Translation by Blasdel 1984:216)

This poem clearly shows the importance Ikkyū placed on the playing of the *shakuhachi*. It also expresses one of the central tenets of later *shakuhachi* devotees: that of *ichion jōbutsu* (一音成仏), that is, the attainment of Buddhahood is inherent in a single sound, “the only song in the universe”. The relationship between the *shakuhachi* and Zen Buddhism becomes even more evident in the centuries following Ikkyū, especially during the Edo period (see below, p.[110](#) and pp.[201-203](#)).

Printed on the published score of “*Murasakino Reibo*” (紫野鈴慕), one of the pieces in the Chikuho *ryū* repertoire of Fuke pieces, is the footnote that this particular piece has been transmitted through the centuries from Ikkyū himself. Though Murasakino is an area in which Ikkyū was said to have lived, there is no evidence either proving or disproving the connection between this piece and Ikkyū.

Besides the poetry of Ikkyū, one of the earliest concrete indications of an association between the *shakuhachi* and Buddhism is a scroll drawing by Shōkei (祥啓, also known as Kei Shoki 啓書記), a priest at the temple Kenchōji (建長寺) during the

Muromachi period. The scroll is said to have been painted sometime between 1469 and 1487, the dates during which Shôkei was at Kenchôji (Seyama and Tukitani 1990:9,13), and thus predates both *Taigenshō* and *Nanajûichiban shokunin uta awase* by about twenty-five years. It is entitled *Rôan suiteki ga* (朗庵吹笛画), translated as ‘Picture of Rôan Playing the Flute’ ([Illustration 5](#)). Above the drawing is an ode to Rôan, which is dated 1477. The drawing is of a wandering monk, complete with bedroll, playing an end-blown flute while apparently walking. The number of fingerholes in the flute depicted in the drawing is unclear.

Rôan (also written 蘆庵, read Roan), though quite possibly a legendary character, figures prominently in a number of sources, written in the early Edo period, of the origins of the *shakuhachi* as an instrument used in a Buddhist context (Ueno 1984:159-162). Rôan, said to have been a foreigner and a friend of Ikkyû, is often credited with either bringing the *hitoyogiri* tradition to Japan, or founding the *komusô* tradition, or both.

Tanabe (1963:147-149 and 1964:299) claims that the *hitoyogiri* was brought from Fuzhou province (福州, J. Fukushû) of southern China in the mid-Muromachi era (1469-1487) by the Zen Buddhist priest Rôan who, with the encouragement of Ikkyû, made religious pilgrimages while playing his flute.

In his Edo period book *Yôshûfushi* (雍州府志, 1691), Kurokawa Dôyû (黒川道祐) claims that Rôan was at Kyûkôan (吸江庵), a hermitage in the Uji district near where Ikkyû was living, and that the two became friends and fellow *shakuhachi* players. Kurokawa further claims that Rôan took the name *Fûketsu dôsha* (風穴道者, Person of the Way of the Wind and Holes), and was the first *komusô*. Virtually the same thing can be read in the following books: *Shiojiri* (塩尻, 1711-1716) by Amano Sadakage (天野信景), *Zoku Edo sunago onkomeisekishi* (続江戸砂子温故名跡志, 1735) by Kikuoka Senryô (菊岡沾涼), *Hakubutsu sen* (博物筌, 1770) by Yamazaki Ransai (山崎蘭斎) and *Shûi miyakomeishozue* (拾遺都名所図会, 1786) by Akisato Shunpuku (秋里舜福) (Ueno 1984:161). The annals of the *komusô* temple in Kyoto, Myôanji (明暗寺, also Meianji), maintain that Rôan was in fact the founder of the temple, and thus was the same person as Kyochiku Zenji (虚竹禅師) (Kamisanô 1974:11; Seyama and Tukitani 1990:13). Despite the abundant references to Rôan in the Edo period, there is no mention of him in sources contemporary with him other than the ode written above the “Rôan suiteki ga”.

Illustration 5
"Picture of Rôan Playing the Flute"



(in Ueno 1984:161)

Illustration 6
Komosô in Sanjûniban shokunin awase uta



(in Ueno 1984:205)

One cannot assume that Shōkei's drawing is an actual portrait of Rōan, especially as there is little proof that Rōan ever existed. On the other hand, though the drawing may not actually portray Rōan, it is nonetheless a drawing of a *shakuhachi*-playing Buddhist monk. Assuming that the drawing was not just a figment of Shōkei's imagination, it indicates a tradition of *shakuhachi*-playing mendicant priests in Japan that is more than five hundred years old. In the mid-16th century collection of poetry and illustrations entitled *Sanjūniban shokunin uta awase* (三十二番職人歌合 ca. 1539) is a poem entitled “Komosō” (薦層). Two lines in the poem read:

Hanazakari fuku tomo dareka itofubeki
Kaze ni wa aranu komo no shakuhachi
 「花ざかり吹くとも誰かいとふべき
 風にはあらぬこもの尺八」
 Amidst spring flowers who should care
 that the wind blows?
 It is not the wind, but the shakuhachi
 of the *komo*

The accompanying critique states: “*Komosō no sanmai...kisen no monko ni yorite shakuhachi o fuku hoka ni wa betsu no waza naki mono ya*” (薦層の三昧...貴賤の門戸によりて尺八を吹くほかには別の業なき者にや): ‘The *komosō* are absorbed in visiting the houses of both rich and poor, begging and playing shakuhachi - that is all they can do’ (translations by Blasdel 1988:82).

This is the first reference to *komosō* (薦層), beggar priests who played the *shakuhachi*. These mendicant *shakuhachi* players are the immediate predecessors to the *komusō* (虚無僧) of the Edo period (see below, pp.102-110). The term *komosō* comes from the word *komo* (薦), a woven straw mat used by beggars as protection from the elements. Kamisangō lists a number of words that have been used to refer to such beggar priests in Japan, for example, *boro* (暮露), *boroboro*, *boronji*, *bonji* (梵字) and *kanji* (漢字), all of which imply a sense of religious poverty, with somewhat more emphasis on the poverty than religion. These beggar priests are mentioned in the fourteenth century collection of essays by Yoshida Kenkō (吉田兼好, 1282-1350) entitled *Tsurezure gusa* (徒然草, ‘Essays in Idleness’), but not as playing the *shakuhachi*.

Two words, one in the above poem and one its commentary, tell us something about the *komosō* of that time. First of all, in the title, the characters usually used to write the word “*komosō*” (薦層, ‘straw mat priest’) are not used. As mentioned above, these characters emphasize the beggar more than the priest. In the title to this poem, the characters *ko* 虚 (‘emptiness’) and *mo* 妄 (‘illusion’) are used instead of *komo* 薦 (‘straw mat’), conveying a much greater sense of other-worldliness and spirituality. Secondly, the word *sanmai* 三昧, translated by Blasdel as “absorbed in” is, in fact, the Sanscrit word *samdhi*, and has the fuller meaning of ‘a perfect state of spiritual concentration’ (Masuda ed. 1983:1437). As Blasdel (1988:83) comments, the above two words indicate that by the time of the writing of the poem, the *komosō* “were not

just the Japanese Middle Ages' equivalents to wandering hippies, but were actually involved in Buddhist disciplines".

Illustrating the above poem in *Sanjûniban shokunin uta awase* is a drawing of a *komosô* playing a *shakuhachi* while seated cross-legged, his straw mat or *komo* and a circular food container at his back ([Illustration 6](#)). Little can be seen as to the type of instrument being used. Ueno (1984:205), in an attempt to classify the instrument in the drawing, claims that it is a long (長管, *chôkan*) *shakuhachi*, that is, an instrument longer than the standard 1.8 *shaku* (about 54 cm.). In fact, *chôkan* were and continue to be used to perform *shakuhachi* pieces associated with Buddhism, low tones produced by these instruments being considered conducive to meditation. It is easy to conjecture that the *komusô* inherited from the earlier *komosô* not only a similar name, lifestyle and the religious practice of flute-playing, but a similar instrument as well.

Nevertheless, one cannot classify the instrument of the *komosô* by the length of the *shakuhachi* in the drawing mentioned above, nor can one conclude any relationship between the types of instruments used by the *komosô* and the *komusô*, other than that they were both *shakuhachi*. The *shakuhachi* in the drawing is, for example, of similar length in proportion to the body of the performer as a *gagaku shakuhachi* in a drawing in the 12th century scroll *Shinzei kogakuzu* (信西古楽図) ([Illustration 2](#)), even though all of the extant *gagaku shakuhachi* are less than 1.8 *shaku* in length. Furthermore, the inaccurate placement of the hands (much too high in relation to the length) makes suspect the accuracy of the artist in portraying any dimension of the flute, including length and diameter. Other attempts at classifying the various *shakuhachi* appearing in historical sources over the centuries are discussed below.

3.2.3 Classification of *Shakuhachi* of the Middle Ages

The *shakuhachi* instruments of the eras prior to the 13th century reference in the *Kyôkunshô* are considered by a number of Japanese scholars to differ from the *shakuhachi* found in references of the next three or four centuries (Kamisangô 1974; Ueno 1984; Tukitani et al. 1991). Chikazane's reference is thought of as the first to indicate this difference. The earlier, pre-Chikazane instruments are called *gagaku shakuhachi*. The *shakuhachi* of the middle ages are frequently referred to in general as *chûsei shakuhachi* (中世尺八) by these and other scholars, who further classify the instruments mentioned in the sources of this period using such terms as *hitoyogiri*, *tempuku* and proto-Fuke *shakuhachi*.

Reasons given for these classifications are differences in the construction of the instrument, in the music performed on it and in the social classes who played it. The difference in construction, i.e., the reduction of the number of fingerholes from six to five that is assumed to have occurred sometime during or after the Kamakura era, is given particular importance by these scholars. In some cases, the reduction of bamboo nodes from three to one is also noted.

Kamisangô (1974:10) states, "In contrast to the *shakuhachi* used in *gagaku*, the *shakuhachi* of the Middle Ages was five-holed" (trans. by Blasdel 1988:77).

Kamisangô also quotes from what he calls the *Boro no shuki* (暮露の手記, 'Handbook of Boro Monks'), written in 1628,²⁴ which states that the *shakuhachi* of the *komosô* had five holes and three nodes, i.e., not a 6 hole *gagaku shakuhachi*. Tukitani, et al. (1991:4) states "The *syakuhati* of the middle ages can be thought of as being, in general, instruments with one node and five finger holes (*hitoyogiri*), with flutes with three nodes and five finger holes (*tempuku* and an early *huke syakuhati*) existing as well". Kishibe states that the Nara period *shakuhachi* disappeared in the Heian period. He further asserts that in the Muromachi period (ca.1392-1568) another flute from China, the *hsiao*, was brought to Japan and modified into the *hitoyogiri*, which "was first favored by mendicant friars and later came into fashion among the lower class Samurai and merchants" (Kishibe 1984:79).

In fact, there is little evidence for the clear-cut differentiation between *shakuhachi* existing in the middle ages and the *shakuhachi* of the preceding eras suggested by Tukitani and Kamisangô, and no evidence at all to back up Kishibe's claims. The *Kyôkunshô* reference above does point to a diffusion of the instrument both in terms of the social classes that used it and the type of music performed on it. It should be remembered, however, that sources before the *Kyôkunshô* prove only that the *shakuhachi* was indeed found in the Imperial court of Nara and Heian Japan. The lack of any reference to the *shakuhachi* being used by other social classes is not proof that it did not occur; the instrument may well have been played by other classes of Japanese people before the Kamakura era.

Also, the *shakuhachi* was still performed by the nobility as late as the mid-14th century (see above). Though the type and number of fingerholes of the *shakuhachi* used by the nobility at this late date is unknown, it is just as likely that it was similar to the six-hole *gagaku shakuhachi* of earlier centuries as it was a five-hole *shakuhachi*.

On the other hand, though there is documentation of the *shakuhachi* being played by nobility well into the Kamakura era, it is not known what type of *shakuhachi* they used. There is no evidence of a six-hole *shakuhachi* being used later than the Heian period. In the intervening eight hundred years between the 7th or 8th century, the date of the instruments preserved in the Shôsôin and Hôryûji, and the early 16th century, with the illustrations found in *Taigenshô*, there appears to be no indication of the number of fingerholes of any of the instruments mentioned in the historical sources of the time.

In any case, the illustrations found in *Taigenshô* of *shakuhachi* with five holes do mark a change in construction, from the six holes and three nodes of the *gagaku shakuhachi* to an instrument with five fingerholes and one bamboo node. Likewise, the *Kyôkunshô* reference indicates a change in the function of the instrument and social circles in which it was played. Such references as *Kyôkunshô* and *Taigenshô* do not shed any light, however, on the question of exactly when and how the changes in construction, social standing and function did occur, nor does any source of the period point with certainty to the clear-cut change that is implied by the terms *gagaku shakuhachi* and *chûsei shakuhachi*.

²⁴ There is some controversy concerning the name of this document (Tukitani 1985).

The sketches of *shakuhachi* in *Taigenshō* illustrate the confusion that can occur in the arbitrary classification of an historical instrument. Kamisangō (1974:11) states that as the flutes pictured in *Taigenshō* have five fingerholes and one bamboo node, they are *hitoyogiri* because, of the various types of *shakuhachi* that exist today, only the *hitoyogiri* has the same number of fingerholes (five) and bamboo nodes (one). Ueno (1984:130) also writes that the *Taigenshō shakuhachi* were clearly the same thing as the *hitoyogiri* of later eras. Tukitani, et al., (1991:4) states that the the shape of the *Taigenshō shakuhachi* is distinctly that of the *hitoyogiri*.

Kamisangō (1974:11) continues by clarifying that the *Taigenshō shakuhachi* are in fact only *hitoyogiri* in a broad sense. Two reasons are given as to why they are not “true *hitoyogiri*”. Firstly, according to Kamisangō, the term did not exist at the time. This assumption is questionable, however, because, though the term *hitoyogiri* is not found in *Taigenshō*, it is used, or at least strongly implied, in poetry that Ikkyū composed well before *Taigenshō* was written (see above p.[77](#).)

The second reason Kamisangō gives for not considering the *Taigenshō shakuhachi* to be true *hitoyogiri* is their being drawn in at least five different lengths. In contrast, the *hitoyogiri* found in later sources as well as the instrument that is today known as a *hitoyogiri*, are always in one pitch only (*ōshiki*, A). Kamisangō elaborates by stating, “In Japan, the term ‘*hitoyogiri*’ is often used to refer to all the shakuhachi flutes of the Middle Ages, regardless of pitch. Strictly speaking, however, ‘*hitoyogiri*’ indicates only the A shakuhachi of the mid-16th century on.” (trans. Blasdel 1988:85). In short, according to this classification, the *Taigenshō shakuhachi* are not exactly *shakuhachi* nor are they *hitoyogiri* as these terms are narrowly defined today, but are both *shakuhachi* and *hitoyogiri* in more general terms.

Rather than attempting to classify the type of vertical flute that is illustrated in *Taigenshō*, suffice it to say that author Chikuzane calls it *shakuhachi*, and that it differs from the *shakuhachi* of the Nara era preserved in Shōsōin and at Hōryūji in the number of both fingerholes and nodes. Likewise, it is safe to conclude from the written and pictorial sources of the time that changes in the social class, the function and the construction of the *shakuhachi* did occur between the 12th and 16th centuries, during which time “a rather complex situation can be seen” (Tukitani, et al., 1991:4).

In contrast to *Taigenshō*, a number of sources in the Edo period (1600-1868) and later use the term *hitoyogiri*. By then, a variant of the *shakuhachi* instrument known exclusively by the latter term had become quite popular. A discussion of the *hitoyogiri* as depicted in the sources of the period, as well as that of another type of *shakuhachi* of the period, the *tempuku*, will begin the following section.

3.3 Types of Shakuhachi in the Edo Period

From the Edo period and onwards, the types of *shakuhachi* instruments, the music performed on them and the kinds of people playing them can be seen more clearly than during the preceding centuries of the middle ages. In a discussion of the *shakuhachi* during the Edo period, it is therefore expedient to make use of the terms for the different forms of the instrument. For example, the use of the term *hitoyogiri* is

questionable in a discussion of the *shakuhachi* instruments of the middle ages. Such is not the case after the early 17th century, when a type of *shakuhachi* distinct from other forms of the instrument and specifically called *hitoyogiri* came into vogue (Kurihara 1918:61-79; Kamisangô 1974:12-13; Ueno 1984:159-197; Kishibe 1984:79; Tukitani et al., 1991:4-5).

By the end of the 19th century, the *hitoyogiri* form of the *shakuhachi* had virtually died out, being supplanted by the form of the *shakuhachi* called the *fu* *shakuhachi*. This instrument was used by the *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’) and is the predecessor of the modern *shakuhachi* (Kamisangô 1974:12). A third type of *shakuhachi*, the *tempuku*, existed in the Edo period, about which little is known but which still survives in the hands of a few enthusiasts. The following history of the *shakuhachi* during the Edo period begins with a short history of the *hitoyogiri*.

3.3.1 The *Hitoyogiri*

As stated earlier, the *hitoyogiri* literally means ‘cut from [bamboo with] one node’. Today the term refers to a *shakuhachi* instrument with five fingerholes, made from a piece of bamboo with only one node, and of a length that produces the pitch A, typically about 33.5 cm. The circumference of a typical *hitoyogiri* is approx. 10 cm. Because of this relatively small circumference, as well as the small size of the blowing edge itself ([Illustration 5](#)), it is extremely difficult to execute what is called the *meri-kari* technique. This technique lowers or raises the pitch by changing the distance and the angle between the lips and the blowing edge, and is essential in performing both modern pieces and pieces that have been handed down by the *komusô* for centuries. In a similar fashion, the size of the fingerholes of the *hitoyogiri*, quite small in comparison with the modern *shakuhachi*, makes finger positions incorporating partially covered holes impractical. Such finger positions are also essential in performing both modern and traditional *shakuhachi* pieces.

Shakuhachi made with only one bamboo node and five fingerholes have existed at least from the beginning of the 16th century, as evidenced by *Taigenshō*. These early “one-node” *shakuhachi*, however, came in various lengths, in contrast to the standardized length implied by the term as it is used today. According to Kamisangô (1974:12), the standardization of the length and thereby the pitch of the fundamental occurred towards the end of the 16th century. Tukitani et al., (1991:5) state that this standardization occurred from the end of the 17th century.

Sources before the mid-17th century such as *Taigenshō* and *Tanteki hidden fu* (短笛秘伝譜, ‘Secretly Transmitted Scores for the Short Flute’), written in 1608 and attributed to Ômori Sôkun (大森宗勲, 1570-1625) do not use the term *hitoyogiri*, even though the instruments being discussed are clearly made with a single node. The term is implied, however, in poetry dating from the late 15th century, and is first used, again in poetry, in the late 16th century (see above p.[77](#)).

According to Tukitani et al., (1991:4), the earliest use of the term *hitoyogiri no shakuhachi* to denote a distinct form of the instrument in a written source other than poetry is found in *Shichiku shoshinshû* (糸竹初心集, ‘Collection [of Pieces] for Beginners of Strings and Bamboo’), a teach-yourself book for *hitoyogiri*, *shamisen*

and *koto* written in 1664 by Nakamura Sôsan (中村宗三). It is also the oldest Japanese publication of printed musical scores. In his book, Sôsan differentiates between the *hitoyogiri* tradition and a longer *komusô shakuhachi* (虚無僧尺八, i.e., *fuke shakuhachi*). Unlike the one node *hitoyogiri*, the latter instrument was made from a thick piece of bamboo with three nodes. Sôsan's need to differentiate between the *shakuhachi no hitoyogiri* and the *fuke shakuhachi* (普化尺八, the instrument of the Fuke sect and predecessor to the modern *shakuhachi*) proves that the latter existed at least before 1664 (Tukitani et al 1991:5).

Shichiku shoshinshû records that the *hitoyogiri* tradition was founded by a man named Sôsa Rojin (宗佐老人, 'Old man Sôsa', also 宗左). Sôsa is similarly credited in two books written by Murata Sôsei (村田宗清), *Dôshô Kyoku* (洞簫曲, 1669, 'Pieces for the *Dôshô*', ["*dôshô*" being an alias for the *hitoyogiri*]) and *Ikanobori* (紙鳶, 1687, a collection of *hitoyogiri* pieces). None of these three sources gives any information about Sôsa (Kurihara 1918:63). *Ikanobori* was later published in a larger publication *Shichiku taizen* (糸竹大全) in 1699²⁵ (*Nihon koten ongaku bunken kai dai* 日本古典音楽文献解題 1987:174). All three publications include folk songs, dance accompaniments and ensemble pieces for the *hitoyogiri*, *koto* and *shamisen*, and indicate the popularity enjoyed by the *hitoyogiri* at the time (Kamisangô 1974:12).

Tanteki hidden fu (短笛秘伝譜, 'Secretly Transmitted Scores for the Short Flute'), written by Ômori Sôkun (大森宗勲, 1570-1625) in 1608, predates *Shichiku shoshinshû* by over half a century and, as the oldest extant book on the *hitoyogiri*, is very important both historically and in terms of transmission of the *shakuhachi* tradition (Kamisangô 1974:12; Tukitani et al., 1991:4). Sôkun is credited with popularizing the instrument amongst the general public, though he never used the term *hitoyogiri*. He also wrote a fingering chart entitled *Shakuhachi tekazu mokuroku* (尺八手数目録, *Inventory of Fingerings for the Shakuhachi*, 1624).

In *Tanteki hidden fu*, Sôkun uses a notation system with the *katakana fu*, *ho*, *u*, (フ, ホ, ウ), etc. The notation is thought to be the oldest documented notation system for the *shakuhachi* family of instruments (HHJ:888), though other *shakuhachi* notation systems are likely to have existed in much earlier times, possibly in connection with the *gagaku shakuhachi* (see discussion of Sadayasu, p.70). Sôkun's notation is similar to *shakuhachi* notation systems still in use today, a primary example being that of the Chikuho *ryû* (竹保流) (Hirano et al., ed. 1989:333).

Tukitani et al., (1991:4) state that during the middle ages, the *hitoyogiri* was used mainly by Buddhist priests and hermits of samurai birth. Sôkun himself is a prime example of the latter. *Shichiku shoshinshû* tells us that Sôkun was from a very old samurai family, being related to Ômori Hikoshichi (大森彦七), a retainer of the first Ashikaga Shôgun Takauji (initially 高氏, later changed to 尊氏, 1305-1358). Sôkun was retainer to the important general Oda Nobunaga (織田信長, 1534-1582). After his lord's death Sôkun withdrew from public life and became a hermit, devoting

²⁵ The publication *Tôryûshichiku taizen* (当流糸竹大全, 1692) may predate by seven years the extant publication *Shichiku taizen* (*Nihon koten ongaku bunken kai dai* 日本古典音楽文献解題 1987:174).

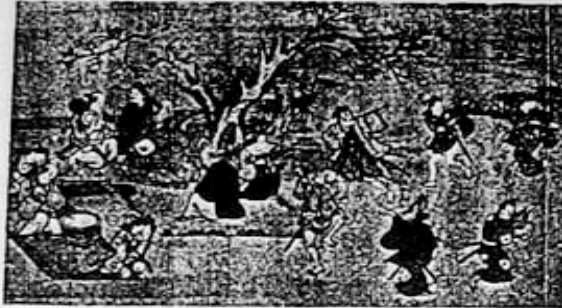
himself to the study of the *hitoyogiri* (Kurihara 1918:70-71). As further evidence, Kamisangô (1974:12) points to the names of persons said to have lived during the middle ages and listed in the three *hitoyogiri* books mentioned above. These names are associated with priests and *bushi* (武士, persons of samurai birth), and have an aura of hermitages about them.

Pictorial evidence of the *hitoyogiri* supports at least the use of the instrument by persons of high social standing. A drawing of a *hitoyogiri* practice session in *Ikanobori* and another drawing of a *hitoyogiri* performance in *Jinrin kummôzu shû* (人倫訓蒙図集, 'Drawings of Professionals', 1689) both show well-groomed samurai, some wearing swords, the symbol of their status. From the tatami mat rooms in which they are playing can be seen examples of the sculptured trees of the high-maintenance Japanese garden ([Illustration 7](#)).

The society in which the *hitoyogiri* was found contrasts sharply with that of the *shakuhachi* playing itinerant street performers, called *komosô* (薦履, 'straw mat priests') at the time. As discussed above (p.[84](#)), the *komosô* were beggar priests and at the opposite end of the social ladder from Sôkun's class. A drawing in the *Kanden kôhitsu* (閑田耕筆, by Ban Kôkei, 1733-1806) shows a *komosô* whose simple dress and long, rough hairstyle are accentuated by the straw bedroll seen tucked under his arm ([Illustration 8](#)).

Unlike Ueno's interpretation (see above p.[85](#)) of the illustration of a *komosô* in *Sanjuniban shokunin uta awase*, it is much easier to accept Kamisangô's assessment of the *Kanden kôhitsu* drawing (1974:12). Kamisangô believes that the proportions of the instrument depicted in the latter drawing is made of a thick piece of bamboo more like the *fuke shakuhachi* of the later *komusô* (虚無僧, 'priest of nothingness'), rather than the thinner, shorter *hitoyogiri*.

Illustration 7
Hitoyogiri performance and practice session



(in Ueno 1984:194)

Illustration 8
Komosô (straw mat priest)



(in Ueno 1984:216)

Despite being played by two different social classes, a number of similarities can be found in the notated music of the two instruments, suggesting to Tukitani et al., (1991:5) some kind of musical exchange. For example, the pieces in the *Shichiku shoshinshū* are divided into two types: *rangyoku* (乱曲), either pieces accompanying vocal or ensemble pieces performed with other instruments, and *te* (手), solo *hitoyogiri* pieces. These two categories of pieces correspond exactly to the two classifications of *fuke shakuhachi* pieces used after the Meiji period (1868-1912), *gaikyoku* (外曲) and *honkyoku* (本曲).

More importantly, titles of pieces can be found that are common to both the *hitoyogiri* and the *fuke shakuhachi*. Tukitani cites the following as examples of titles of pieces found in both *hitoyogiri* and *fuke shakuhachi* repertoires: the numerous *Shishi* (獅子) pieces such as “*Shishi no kyoku*” (獅子の曲), “*Azuma jishi*” (吾妻獅子), “*Kumoi jishi*” (雲居獅子), “*Sakai jishi*” (堺獅子, also written “*Sakae jishi*” 栄獅子), etc.; the *Sugagaki* (菅垣) pieces such as “*Sanya sugagaki*” (三谷菅垣), “*Koro sugagaki*” (転菅垣) and “*Akita sugagaki*” (秋田菅垣); the title “*Rinzetsu*” (りんぜつ); and finally pieces with the word *Reibo* (鈴慕) or *Renbo* (恋慕) appended to the title, such as “*Renbo nagashi*” (恋慕流し).

According to Tukitani et al., (1991:6), who believe that the melodies of the *hitoyogiri* changed over a long period of time due to the transmission processes, the same sort of correspondence cannot be found in the melodies of pieces of the two traditions. She lists, but does not give evidence of, the following three ways in which the *hitoyogiri* pieces differ from the *fuke shakuhachi* pieces, even those of the same name. Firstly, the mode or scale changed from the anhemitonic pentatonic *ritsu* (律) scale, (e.g., D, E, G, A, C) to the *miyako bushi* (都節) scale, which has semitones, e.g., (D, E-flat, G, A-flat, C). Secondly, the *hitoyogiri* pieces have a discernable beat while the *fuke shakuhachi* pieces characteristically have free rhythms. Finally the performance techniques of the latter pieces are more complex than those of the former. In addition, some of the melodies themselves seem to have changed. This is not to say that musical interchange did not occur at all between the *hitoyogiri* and *fuke shakuhachi* traditions, but that the interchange that did occur is manifested elsewhere (Tukitani et al., 1991:6).

The *hitoyogiri* experienced its greatest popularity during the early Edo period, a time noted for its artistic freedom. Surprisingly, very few people were performing it by the middle of the 18th century, and by the early 19th century the tradition had almost become extinct. Despite prolonged and concerted efforts in the 1820s and 1830s by Edo physician Kamiya Juntei (神谷潤亭) to emulate Sôkun's success in popularizing the instrument two centuries earlier, the *hitoyogiri* was never again played by more than a handful of enthusiasts. The eventual demise of the instrument is related to the inability of the *hitoyogiri* player to perform the *meri-kari* and the partially covered fingering techniques mentioned earlier. Such techniques became essential in playing pieces for the *shakuhachi*, especially after the scale or mode changed in much of the music performed in Japan between the mid-16th and mid-17th centuries (Kamisanô 1974:12-14).

3.3.2 *Tempuku*

The most enigmatic, least known and least discussed of all of the end-blown bamboo flutes of Japan is the *tempuku*. Kurihara, in his book *Shakuhachi Shikô* (尺八史考, 'Shakuhachi History', 1918), does not mention the *tempuku*. Ueno (1984:227-233) devotes a mere six pages to the instrument in his three hundred and thirty-three page book *Shakuhachi no rekishi* (尺八の歴史), compared, for example, with forty-eight pages to the *hitoyogiri*. Malm (1959:137) devotes only eleven words to the *tempuku* in a section on the *biwa*, and does not refer to it at all in the section on *shakuhachi*, other than including it in a photograph of types of *shakuhachi*.

The *tempuku* is considered a member of the *shakuhachi* family because its mouthpiece is similar to all other types of *shakuhachi*, that is, the *gagaku shakuhachi*, *hitoyogiri*, *fuke shakuhachi* and modern *shakuhachi*. But the greatest variation in mouthpiece construction among these instruments is found in the *tempuku*. The blowing edge is made not only by filing the outside of a portion of the top edge of the bamboo, as with the *shakuhachi*, but also by filing slightly on the inside of the bamboo as well, as with the Chinese *dongxiao* (see [Illustration 1, p.61](#)). Kamisangô states that the mouthpiece is the same shape as the *dongxiao* (1974:11), but this is not entirely correct, as the outer edge of the *tempuku* is also filed away at the blowing edge, which is not the case with the Chinese flute. The five fingerholes of the *tempuku* are very small, even smaller than those of the *hitoyogiri*. The fingerholes are positioned so that the distances between them increase progressively from the lower to the higher holes; this too occurs with the *hitoyogiri*, but to a lesser degree. The *tempuku* is about 30 cm long and is made from a piece of bamboo of the species called in Japan *hotei chiku* (布竹). It has three nodes, the same number as some of the early *fuke shakuhachi*. The circumference is much smaller than either of the latter two instruments, being approximately 7-8 cm.

The *tempuku* seems to have reached its zenith in popularity in the latter 16th century in Satsuma province (薩摩) on the island of Kyûshû (九州). In the book *Tempuku* (天吹 1986, ed. *Tempuku dôkôkai*; a collection of essays and articles by various authors) are found illustrations drawn in a style typical of the Edo period ([Illustration 9](#)). Though no explanations of or references to these illustrations are given, they show members of the samurai class playing what appear to be *tempuku* together with the *satsuma biwa*, another instrument popular in the province (*Tempuku dôkôkai* 1986:xi,xii,127,174). The first reference to the name *tempuku* might be in the *Nippo jisho* (日葡辞書), an encyclopedia published in 1603 (Tukitani 1986:4). There is also the story of Kitahara Hizen no Kami (臣北原肥前守), the highest ranking retainer of the Shimazu (島津) clan. Captured during the famous battle of Sekigahara in 1600 by the Tokugawa (徳川) forces, Kitahara requested permission to play his *tempuku* one more time before being executed. Permission was granted. Kitahara's performance so moved his executioners that his life was spared (Shirao 1986:18-19).

Illustration 9
Drawings of tempuku performances



(in Tempuku 1986:xi, 153, 175)

Shirao (1986:120-126) lists ten early references to the instrument, including the Kitahara reference. The earliest of these references is the *Nippo jisho* (日葡辞書, 1603), mentioned above. In a personal communication, Tukitani stated that in the edition, the word *tempuku* is translated into the standard Japanese language by using the characters *tempuku* (天吹), which were taken from a standard Japanese language dictionary. It is possible that at the time of publication of the original edition, these characters were not used in the dialect of Japanese of Nagasaki, the place of publication.

It is widely accepted that the last performer of the *tempuku* was Ôta Jôichi (太田良一, 1888-1957), who was also a skilled *biwa* player (Ueno 1984:227; Shirao 1986:4). Ôta taught only seven short pieces to Shirao Kunitoshi (白尾国利, 1920-), who makes the instrument and who both Ueno (1984:227) and Kamisangô (1974:11) claim is the sole remaining member of the tradition. If this is the case, then Shirao's seven pieces are all that remain of the traditional repertoire of the *tempuku*. Their titles, traditionally written only in the Japanese syllabary *katakana* (片仮名) rather than in *kanji* (漢字) as is customary, are as follows: “*Shirabe*” (シラベ), “*Anoyama*” (アノヤマ), “*Tsutsune*” (ツツネ), “*Takane*” (タカネ), “*Ichiyana*” (イチヤナ), “*Tennoshiyama*” (テンノシヤマ) and “*Senpesan*” (センペサン). The durations of these pieces range from thirty seconds to four minutes. The first three are solo pieces, while the remaining four were performed with songs. The lyrics to the songs are still known but the melodies are not; it is not known whether or not the *tempuku* pieces are in fact these melodies or just the accompaniments to the songs (Tukitani et al. 1991:7).

As with the *hitoyogiri*, a connection between the *tempuku* and the *fu*ke *shakuhachi*, the predecessor to the modern *shakuhachi*, can be seen in two ways. Firstly, a connection can be seen in the two categories of pieces used to describe their repertoires. Both the *tempuku* and the *fu*ke *shakuhachi* were used to play pieces that were strictly classified as either solo pieces or ensemble pieces. Secondly, a connection can be seen in the titles of the *tempuku* solo pieces. All three of the solo piece titles are also used in the *fu*ke *shakuhachi* tradition, though not always as titles.

For example, there is no specific piece in the *fu*ke *shakuhachi* repertoire entitled ‘*Takane*’ as there is in the *tempuku* repertoire. Instead, the word *takane* (高音, literally ‘high sound’) denotes a particular section found within a number of pieces in the *fu*ke *shakuhachi* repertoire. *Shirabe* (調, ‘searching’, ‘melody’, ‘tuning’) is either the title of or part of the title of a number of *fu*ke *shakuhachi* pieces as well as the name of a section of some pieces, which acts as a prelude or introductory section to the main body of those pieces (Tukitani et al., 1991:7).

Finally, Tukitani claims that the outlines of the structure of the melodies of the three solo *tempuku* pieces show a number of correlations to the *fu*ke *shakuhachi* piece “*Sanya no kyoku*” (三谷の曲, ‘Three Valleys Piece’) (Tukitani 1986:20). Tukitani et al., (1991:7) further speculate that similar connections between the titles of the remaining *tempuku* solo pieces and certain names or terms found in the *fu*ke *shakuhachi* tradition, as well as those connections mentioned above between the *hitoyogiri* tradition and the *fu*ke *shakuhachi* tradition, suggest that the solo pieces of

the *tempuku* and *hitoyogiri* in some cases may have acted as prototypes for pieces in the more recently developed *fuke shakuhachi* solo repertoire.

The *tempuku* tradition was almost entirely an oral one. There are no traditional scores for the *tempuku* in existence, though modern transcriptions of the remaining pieces exist, in both staff notation and traditional *shakuhachi* notation. Despite the dearth of traditional pieces and of teachers and performers, there exists in Kyûshû an active society of *tempuku* enthusiasts, maintained largely through the efforts of Shirao. In 1986, the society published a book entitled, simply, *Tempuku*. It includes the writings of a number of authors and is the best single source on the instrument. The expression, “old traditions never die out completely in Japan” appears to hold true in the case of this enigmatic instrument of southern Japan.

3.4 From *Komosô* (薦僧) to *Komusô* (虚無僧)

Three developments occurred in the *shakuhachi* tradition during the early Edo period. Firstly, the life of low class flute-playing beggar priests, the *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’), was embraced by many of the increasing number of *rônin* who had been made masterless by the consolidation of power through the wars of the Tokugawa military government (Kamisangô 1974:16).

Secondly, the term for the wandering flute-playing priests changed from the lowly *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’) to the Zen Buddhist inspired *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’).²⁶ The latter name may have been favoured by the former samurai who swelled the ranks of the mendicant flute players as a means of differentiating themselves from their predecessors, the *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’), who were typically of lower birth (see above p.84).

Finally, the *shakuhachi* instrument itself changed from the short, thin flute of the *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’), made from a non-root-bearing end piece of bamboo, to a longer, thicker flute made from bamboo bearing roots. The number of nodes may have also changed from three to five at this time (Kamisangô 1974:14). Reasons for these changes may have included a desire of the ex-samurai *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’) to have their instruments double as effective weapons, and a need for some prominent symbol of their disassociation from the earlier lowly *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’), who appear in illustrations of the period performing on a *hitoyogiri*-like small bamboo flute. These developments will be described more fully below.

There are several literary references to the *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’), the mendicant flute players of the 15th and 16th centuries, even after the beginning of the

²⁶ It is common practice, especially in the literature of Zen Buddhism, to replace one of the ideograms usually used to form a common word with another ideogram of the same pronunciation but of an entirely different meaning, or to reverse the order of the ideograms. Either method frequently gives new meaning and insight to a commonplace word or situation. The 13th century Zen master, Dôgen, was especially fond of this technique. See Kim (1985).

Edo period (1600-1868). In a 17th century annotated edition (1621) of Yoshida Kenkô's (吉田兼好, 1282-1350) 14th century *Tsurezure kusa* (徒然草, 'Essays in Idleness'), Hayashi Razan (林羅山, 1583-1657) refers to Yoshida's term *boroboro* (ぼろぼろ, literally 'ragged', i.e., beggar priests) in a footnote, stating that, "Lately, those called *komosô* (薦僧, 'straw mat priest') do not look like priests nor do they appear to be laymen. They carry swords and play the *shakuhachi*. With a straw mat on their backs, they walk down the road, stop before people's gates and beg for things. This is the tradition that has come down from the *boroboro*" (Ueno 1984:206).

Ueno (1984:206) points out that Hayashi's description of the *komosô* (薦僧, straw mat priest) is identical to that in a mid-16th century collection of poetry, *Sanjûniban shokunin uta awase* (三十二番職人歌合 ca. 1539), except that in the later reference, they were carrying swords, while in the earlier reference they were not. The implication of Ueno's observation is that the ranks of the later *komosô* (薦僧, 'straw mat priest') of the early Edo period had evolved from the low class beggar monks of the previous centuries to persons still of a rough look, but presumably from the higher class of the *bushi* or samurai, since they alone had the right to carry swords.

A mid-Edo period drawing of a *komosô* (薦僧, 'straw mat priest') can be found in *Kanden kôhitsu* (閑田耕筆), written by Ban Kôkei (伴蒿蹊, 1733-1806). The drawing shows a man with long hair and his *komo* (薦, 'straw mat') at his side. The flute in his hands appears to be longer and much thicker than the flute of the *komosô* (薦僧, 'straw mat priest') depicted in the previously mentioned early 16th century drawing, *Sanjûniban shokunin uta awase*. Kamisangô observes that it certainly does not have the short, thin dimensions of a *hitoyogiri* (Kamisangô 1974:11), and is closer in appearance to the *shakuhachi* used by the later *komusô* (虚無僧, 'priest of nothingness').

The term *komusô* (虚無僧, 'priest of nothingness') seems to have evolved quite naturally from the earlier, more earthy term *komosô* (薦僧, 'straw mat priest') and is even closer in meaning to the characters used in the 16th century poem *Sanjûniban shokunin uta awase* for the word '*komosô*': 虚妄僧 ('priest of emptiness and illusion'). In this reference, the word *komosô* was written with the characters *ko* 虚 ('emptiness') and *mo* 妄 ('illusion'), conveying a much greater sense of other-worldliness and spirituality than the original word *komo* 薦 ('straw mat'). In the book *Keichôkenbunshû* (慶長見聞集, 'Collection of Information of the Keichô Era', completed in 1614) the word *komusô* is written with the characters 古無僧 (literally 'old nothingness priest') (Ueno 1984:206). Ban Kôkei (1733-1806) wrote, "People who play the *shakuhachi* and beg for rice are called *komusô* (虚無僧, 'priest of nothing') nowadays, but in the collection of poetry *Kanjinshô uta awase* (勧進聖歌合) the characters *komosô* (薦僧, 'straw mat priest') are used" (Kamisangô 1974:11). These sources indicate that in the early 17th century, the *komosô* (薦僧, 'straw mat priest') and *komusô* (虚無僧, 'priest of nothingness') were one and the same group of people.

The book *Keichôkenbunshû*, mentioned above, is the source of the widely reported (Kurihara 1918:180; Malm 1959:157; Kamisangô 1974:14; Sanford 1977:437; Ueno

1984:206; Blasdel 1988:96), but frequently inaccurately told story of the famous Ôtori Itsube (大鳥逸兵衛, executed in 1612) meeting a *komusô* (written 古無僧, ‘old nothing priest’). Used as an example of ribald Edo humour and sensibilities, Malm, Kamisangô, Sanford and Blasdel write that Ôtori insulted a *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’) by taking his *shakuhachi* and playing it with his rear end. In fact, the original passage as quoted by Ueno (1984:206) states that Ôtori, “taking the *shakuhachi* from the *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’), turned it upside down and blew into the end (尻)”, thereby insulting the *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’). The misinterpretation may stem from the use of the ideograph 尻, which can mean a person’s rear end as well as the end of a pipe (as in *kanjiri* 管尻), the pipe in this case being the *shakuhachi*.

The Ôtori story does not end there. What follows the description of Ôtori’s rudeness is historically more important, yet ironically is not mentioned in any of the above references. It is one of the earliest references made by a *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’) to the ninth century Chinese monk Puhua (普化, J. Fuke). Fuke is the central figure in the *Kyotaku denki* legend of the origins of the spiritually oriented *shakuhachi* tradition (see pp.36-39), and after whom the religious sect of the *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’), Fuke *shû* (普化宗) was named. The *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’) in the above story replied to Ôtori’s insult by saying that in the past he was a fourth generation *bushi* but now he had become a hermit, leading the life of poverty and destitution. Following in the footsteps of Saint Fuke (普化上人), he had become a disciple of the Buddha, and had entered the way of enlightenment.

Another early reference to Fuke can be found in the book *Seisuishô* (醒睡笑, ‘Waking Sleeping Laughter’) dated 1623, which describes a *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’) agreeing to reply to questions directed at him only after being addressed as a Fuke priest (普化僧, *fukesô*). These two references to Fuke indicate that the association of the *shakuhachi* playing tradition of the *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’) with the Chinese priest Fuke and its accompanying spiritual connotations were fairly common knowledge as early as the late 16th or early 17th century (Ueno 1984:206-207). Nakatsuka (1979:260-262) has suggested that the connection between the 9th century Chinese monk Fuke and the Buddhist *shakuhachi* tradition, as manifested in the *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’) and later in the *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’), might have originated with Ikkyû Zenji (1394-1482), one of Japan’s most revered Zen Buddhist priests. Ikkyû’s poetry clearly expresses his fondness for both Fuke and the *shakuhachi* (see p.77 for examples of Ikkyû’s poetry).

In contrast to the image of the other-worldly, *shakuhachi*-playing mendicant “disciple of Buddha” of the Edo period, are references to extremely worldly qualities possessed by other characters associated with the *shakuhachi*. A prime example is the story of Karigane Bunshichi (雁金文七), found in *Katabisashi* (傍廂, 1853). Karigane, a *kyôyaku* (侠客, literally ‘chivalrous person’, or ‘one who champions the underdog’) from Osaka was skilful at playing the *shakuhachi* and taught it to all of his followers. Eventually he abandoned performing the *shakuhachi*, but continued to use it in another way. By changing the length of the instrument, and using the thick root-bearing bamboo, he created an effective weapon with which to fight (Kurihara

1918:185-187). Kamisangô (1974:14) points out that Karigane was beheaded in 1703, one hundred and fifty years before *Katabisashi* was written, and suggests that the details of this mid-19th century story might therefore be suspect. The essence of the story is nevertheless corroborated by mention in theatrical plays, and in novels of the period, of the fondness of *kyôkyaku* for the *shakuhachi*, and by the existence of the term “fighting *shakuhachi*” (喧嘩尺八, *kenka shakuhachi*).

The growing numbers of *shakuhachi*-playing wandering monks as well as the phenomenon of the *kenka shakuhachi* in the early Edo period can be explained in part by the state of Japanese society at that time. The Tokugawa military government consolidated its control over most of the country in the beginning of the 17th century, at the expense of a number of defeated clans and lords. The professional soldiers of the defeated armies frequently became “masterless samurai” (浪人, *rônin*). As educated members of the highest social class in Japan, for whom work in any other profession but their own would have been unacceptable, the *rônin* were suddenly without employment and without a purpose to live.

Many of the ever-increasing numbers of *rônin* roaming the country saw no honourable occupation besides begging. Some were attracted to the spiritual path of renunciation as Buddhist monks. Others continued using the skills of their original profession, but illegally as extortionists, thieves and gangsters. The life of the *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’) or *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’) appealed to the *ronin* because, as Sanford (1977:413) points out, it offered elements of all three options, i.e., mendicancy, spirituality and crime. The religious vocation offered a means of supporting oneself while avoiding humiliation, as religious mendicancy had been a respected custom in the East for over a millennium. Furthermore, it offered solace and companionship to those who were sincerely seeking spiritual enlightenment. Those of dubious religious sincerity were attracted by the undemanding lifestyle compared to the regimentation of one of the established Buddhist sects. Finally, soliciting alms for the Buddha was a superb cover for those former mercenaries more inclined to extortion than devout charity seeking.

The instrument used by the early *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’) was changed sometime during the early Edo period, though not necessarily by Karigane, mentioned above. The *shakuhachi* instrument before the 17th century was always made from parts of the bamboo other than the root end. This is true of the 8th century *gagaku shakuhachi* preserved at Shôshôn, and the types of *shakuhachi* known as *hitoyogiri* and *tempuku*. *Shakuhachi* made from sections of bamboo having no roots and three nodes seem to be the norm in illustrations depicting the instrument in the hands of *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’) and early *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’). As an illustrative example, Kamisangô (1974:14) also cites a rootless, three node pre-*fuke shakuhachi* in a statue of Ryôen Kyochiku Zenji (了圓虚竹禪師), the legendary 13th century founder of Myôanji, one of the major temples of the Fuke sect (see below). As Kyochiku himself is historically doubtful (Nakatsuka 1979:142-143), the historical validity of the *shakuhachi* depicted in the statue is also questionable.

It is quite plausible that the not infrequent use of *shakuhachi* as weapons by beggar priests or by *kyôkyaku* in the early Edo period necessitated a change in construction

(Kurihara 1918:179-188; Kamisangô 1974:14; Sanford 1977:428). Sanford (1977:428) also suggests a second reason. As former members of the *bushi* class, the masterless samurai who joined the ranks of wandering beggar flute players may have attempted to disassociate themselves from the earlier low class “straw mat priests”, who seemed to have favoured smaller *shakuhachi* made of rootless pieces of bamboo, e.g., the *hitoyogiri*. This same reason could have also been the motivating factor in the changing of the appellation *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’) to *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’), the latter name sounding more lofty than the former.

More important than the changes in the name of the *shakuhachi*-playing priests, and in the construction of their *shakuhachi*, was the establishment in the early 17th century of a religious organization recognized by the *bakufu*, thus institutionalizing the tradition of the *komusô*. This organization was called the Fuke sect and is the topic of the following section.

3.5 The *Fuke* sect

During most of the Edo period, the history of the *shakuhachi* tradition is dominated by a religious institution called the Fuke sect. Little can be said of the early days of the sect, though its founders appear to have used deception as one means of gaining official recognition. In its heyday, it was not only officially recognized by the *bakufu*, but also granted a number of highly desirable special privileges. It had three “head” temples, in Edo and in Kyôto, and numerous smaller temples located throughout much of Japan. For a number of political and social reasons, explained below, the 19th century saw the decline and eventual demise of the sect in 1871. Three stages—early history; golden age; and decline and demise—though an arbitrary delineation, serve as a guide to the history of the most important institution of the entire *shakuhachi* tradition.

3.5.1 The Early Fuke Sect

In the early part of the Edo period, the mendicant *shakuhachi* players organized themselves into what became known as the Fuke *shû* (普化宗), a religious sect eventually affiliated with the Rinzai sect of Zen Buddhism. This sect and its members dominated the *shakuhachi* tradition until the sect was abolished by the newly established government of the Meiji era (1868-1914). Even today, the lasting influences of the Fuke *shû* and its members pervade the *shakuhachi* tradition, particularly the *honkyoku* tradition. Effects which the lifestyle, philosophy and religious practices of members of the sect have had upon *honkyoku* can be detected in the pieces as they are performed today.

The origins and early development of the *Fuke* sect are surrounded by myth and legend, with very few substantiated historical sources. The majority of the existing sources, dating from the latter 17th century, are documents written by the government and addressed to the Fuke sect, and the written replies of the Fuke sect to those documents. Lack of evidence concerning the *Fuke* movement in the early 17th century prevents a definitive description of the early development of the sect.

By some accounts, it would seem remarkable that the Fuke sect was ever conceived or allowed to exist. As mentioned above (p.108), the tendency towards less than lofty aspirations by some of the *komosô* (薦僧, ‘straw mat priest’) and early *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’) made it at times difficult for the general populace to differentiate their method of begging for alms from the act of extortion. As a whole, the mendicant *shakuhachi* players, even the most sincere of them, were not looked upon with respect. Until the Fuke sect was granted official status, writes Sanford (1977:413), the *komusô* (虚無僧, ‘priest of nothingness’) were merely “a loosely organized fraternity of wandering beggar-minstrels....whose only connection with religion was a very nominal claim to the status of Buddhist lay-brother (優婆塞, *ubasoku*), a status that functioned primarily to justify their practice of begging for alms”.

Not all of the *rônin* were the rough, self-seeking characters typified by *kyôyaku* such as Karigane Bunshichi. On the contrary, Sansom (1963:57) points out that though the trouble-making *rônin* receive a great deal of attention in the literature of the time, they were in fact a minority among a group of people belonging to the highest and most educated class of society in Edo Japan. Most of the *rônin* quietly lived their lives as best they could under their new circumstances, some as instructors or tutors in the various arts of *bushidô*, or even as small farmers. Other *rônin* became noted scholars. It is therefore not surprising that some of these people chose the life of the *komusô*, and developed *shakuhachi honkyoku* into a highly esoteric and spiritual tradition.

However accurate the two above contrasting images of the early *komusô* might be, the loose group of begging musicians managed to organize themselves into sixteen sects²⁷ (派, *ha*) throughout the country even before official recognition in 1677 (Nakatsuka 1979:272-273). They also established a number of lodges for use as stopovers during their pilgrimages (Nakatsuka 1979:332, 336). Some of these reststops gradually became more established, becoming much like small temples, with *komusô* who resided at them on a relatively permanent basis increasing in numbers. Kurihara (1918:124) states that in the beginning of the Tokugawa era there were over 120 *komusô* temples and sub-temples, and at the end of the Tokugawa era there were still 92 temples, though Sanford (1977:415) believes this to be “a goodly exaggeration”.²⁸ These temples and the *komusô* who supported them became the organizational foundation of what was to become the Fuke sect.

According to Nakatsuka (1979:105), Kamisangô (1974:16) and Sanford (1977:415), many of the *komusô* of the time began to see the necessity of organizing themselves into an acknowledged religious sect. By doing so, they may have thought that the spiritual practice of the bonefide seekers of enlightenment (themselves) would be facilitated and that the undesirable elements of the *komusô* movement could be eliminated or at least controlled. They also realized that the achievement of their goals would be determined on a political rather than spiritual level. Therefore, the

²⁷ See Blasdel 1988:108-109 for a partial listing of the sects and temples affiliated with them.

²⁸ Sanford was not familiar with Kurihara’s book *Shakuhachi shikô*, even though his secondary sources appear to quote it extensively. Sanford calls *Shakuhachi shikô* “a traditional source”, and “a late Edo-period work”. Kurihara wrote *Shakuhachi shikô* in 1918 (Taishô 7), fifty years after the end of the Edo period.

legitimization of the movement was of the utmost importance. A temple headquarters was one of the primary prerequisites.

There are no surviving historical sources that document the founding of the head temples of the Fuke sect, nor is there clear indication of which temple became the headquarters for the *komusô*. There are two possibilities as to which temple became the first main temple of the early *komusô*. One possibility is presented by Kamisangô (1974:16), who writes that the group of *komusô* instrumental in creating the Fuke sect initially designated the lodge at Shirakawa (白川) in Kyôto, which they called Myôanji (明暗寺, 'Temple of Light and Darkness'), to be the centre from which they hoped to achieve their goals. Later, in order to circumvent the strict rules of the Edo government against the founding of new temples,²⁹ various documents were contrived to create the impression that Myôanji actually came under the jurisdiction of the important Kyôto temple, Kôkokuji. As a sub-temple of an already established temple, Myôanji could claim to be exempt from the prohibition of new temples. Adding further weight to the claim that Myôanji was not a new temple and therefore exempt from the prohibition was the claim that Ryôen Kyochiku Zenji (了圓虚竹禅師, also known as Kichiku 寄竹) founded Myôanji on July 28, 1298. According to the *Kyotaku denki* legend, Ryôen was one of Hotto Kokushi's four main *shakuhachi* disciples (Nakatsuka 1979:144)).

According to Kamisangô (1974:16), the government agreed to acknowledge the Fuke sect on the condition that the headquarters be moved to Edo, where it could be kept more easily under observation and control. The *komusô* headquarters were duly transferred to two temples located on the outskirts of Edo, Ichigetsuji (一月寺) located in present day Chiba prefecture, and Reihôji (鈴法寺) in western Edo, and both temples opened offices in central Edo.

Sanford (1977:431-432) differs from Kamisangô by stating that Ichigetsuji and Reihôji were the two main temples of the Fuke sect from the beginning. Furthermore, according to Sanford (1977:431), Myôanji, though recognized as one of three major Fuke temples, was merely a sub-temple of Reihôji until as late as 1767, the year that Myôanji was redesignated as a sub-temple of Kôkokuji. In this way, Myôanji could claim a connection with the supposed founder of the Fuke sect, Hotto Kokushi, also the founder of Kôkokuji.

Sanford further states that the claim that Myôanji was founded in 1298 by Ryôen Kyochiku was motivated by the rivalry between Myôanji and the two head temples in Edo. The traditional founder of Ichigetsuji was said to be Kinsen (金先), the disciple of Pao Fu, who was, with Kyochiku, a disciple of Hotto. The founder of Reihôji was said to be the famous samurai Kusunoki Masakatsu (楠正勝, fl. c. 1400).³⁰ Thus by becoming a sub-temple of the temple founded by Hotto Kokushi, and itself founded by Hotto's disciple Kyochiku, Myôanji could claim a lineage which predated both

²⁹ These rules were instigated by the military government of Edo primarily in reaction to uprisings by Christians (Kamisangô 1974:16).

³⁰ Sanford gives the characters for Kusunoki as 楠木; the second character appears to be redundant.

Ichigetsuji and Reihôji, its two rival temples, thus elevating its own status as one of the “mother temples” of the Fuke sect.

As stated above, though there appears to be little evidence that definitively proves which temple was the original “main temple” of the *komusô*, it should be pointed out that Kamisangô is considered one of Japan’s primary *shakuhachi* historians, while Sanford is not.

3.5.2 The *Keichô no Okitegaki* and the Ordinance of 1677

The most important document concerning the founding of the Fuke sect is a government decree known informally as the *Keichô no okitegaki* (慶長掟書). The formal title of this decree is *Gonyûkoku no migiri ôsewatasaresôrô onokitegaki* (御入国之砌(節)被仰渡候御掟書).³¹ It was purported to be a “copy” of an original, which most likely never existed, and was, ironically, accepted by the Japanese government as authentic for over two centuries. It officially recognizes the Fuke sect and defines the privileges and responsibilities of its members. The Fuke sect claimed that the original had been written and dated Keichô 19 (1612) by the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate, Tokugawa Ieyasu (徳川家康) himself.

The Fuke sect could not produce the original government issued document, which would have been imprinted with an authenticating government seal, giving the excuse that the original had been destroyed in a fire. Moreover, no government record of the issuance of the original document can be found in the archives of the Edo government. Between 1677 and 1894, the Fuke sect presented at least six versions of the decree to the *bakufu* government.³² These copies exhibit more inconsistencies than can be explained by the process of hand-copying an original document. For example, from eight to twenty-one provisions are listed in various copies.

Doubts as to the authenticity of the document were first recorded by Arai Hakuseki (新井白石, 1657-1725), a late 17th century scholar (Kurihara 1918:144). Subsequent research (Mikami 1902:61-76; Kurihara 1918:144-151; Nakatsuka 1979:220-229; Kamisangô 1977:16; Ueno 1984:234-248; Takahashi 1990:54-74), has strongly indicated that the various copies of *Keichô no okitegaki* were all forgeries perpetrated by members of the Fuke sect, and that the shogunate knew or at least suspected that this was the case, yet accepted the document as much.

Despite such knowledge of a suspicion, the Shogunate chose to accept the validity of the document because of a desire to control the ever increasing number of *rônin*.

³¹ Takahashi (1990:54) gives the following readings: *Gonyûkoku no setsu owatasesôrô okitegaki*. There are discrepancies both in the *kanji* and the readings given by Sanford (1977:418).

³² Takahashi (1991:55-67) lists and gives full translations of six versions of the *Keicho no okitegaki*.

Officially recognizing the Fuke sect was one way of exercising such control, if only indirectly. Many of the *rônin* whom the *bakufu* found difficult to control would be motivated to join the Fuke sect with its newly acquired privileges. The Fuke sect could then assert authority over its members, thereby strengthening governmental stability.

Consequently, the main provisions set forth in the numerous versions of *Keichô no okitegaki* to a large degree defined the Fuke sect and the lifestyle of the *komusô* during the period in which the decree was in force, that is from the middle of the 17th century until the latter 19th century.

Ironically, the number of provisions included in the versions of the document increased as the position of the Fuke sect weakened. Of the six versions translated by Takahashi (1990:55-67), the shortest contains nine provisions. The longest has twenty-one provisions, with other earlier versions containing ten, eleven, seventeen and twenty provisions. The versions with the least provisions seem clearly to favour the government, listing obligations of the *komusô* to the *bakufu* as well as a minimum of rights. In contrast, those versions with the most provisions give the members of the Fuke sect a number of extraordinary privileges not included in other versions. In other words, the document, which was originally forged to provide the Fuke sect with official recognition, continued to be tampered with in attempts to maintain recognition and to increase privileges (Takahashi 1991:67-68).

The first provision of all copies of *Keichô no okitegaki* defines the community of the *komusô* as a religious order whose function is to provide temporary refuge for *rônin*. Other main points are the special privileges granted to the *komusô*: that is, freedom of travel, a monopoly on the use of *shakuhachi*, the right to bear arms and the privilege of being under the direct legal jurisdiction of the *bakufu*, rather than local authorities.

Below is a version of the document entitled *Sadame*, found in Kurihara (1918:140-143). This version contains the greatest number of provisions:

1. The Japanese *komusô* fraternity is a religious group specially designed to serve the needs of *ronin* and samurai who wish to withdraw temporarily from the world. The temples of the *komusô* do not pertain to the jurisdiction of the authorities in which they are located. They are reserved only for the samurai.
2. When the parent temple issues the rules, everyone should abide by them. A *komusô* who belongs to a sub-temple will receive penalization from the parent temple.
3. When a *komusô* performs itinerancy, he is obeying the laws of his sect. Therefore, he must be allowed to do it freely.
4. When a *komusô* is practising *takuhatsu* [托鉢, religious mendicancy] in a foreign land, the town's people cannot molest him according to the laws of that land. If the *komusô* is prevented from doing *takuhatsu*, he should report to the main temple. If the main temple is not able to handle the matter, it should be reported as soon as possible to the Edo Bugyô [magistrate].
5. During a *komusô*'s pilgrimages, within the streets or in the lodging places, he is not to remove the *tengai* [天蓋, basket hat] and show his face.
6. A *komusô* should not carry arms during his *takuhatsu*. He is allowed to have a dagger shorter than one *shaku* (30.3 cm.) and to hide it in his clothing.

7. A *komusô* is also a samurai who pursues his enemies during his pilgrimages. He, therefore, should be given free admission to *shibai* [芝居, theatrical entertainment], etc., and be exempted from toll fees and boat fares everywhere he goes.
8. The *bansô* (priest keeper) should be sent to all the country, to supervise *komusô* behavior.
9. If the *bansô* discovers a false *komusô* during his expeditions, he should deal with him according to the laws. If the *bansô* agrees to be bribed and sets the false *komusô* free, he, as well as the false *komusô*, will be rigorously punished. Therefore, be on guard and behave yourself!
10. No one is allowed to play the *shakuhachi* besides a *komusô*. If a samurai desires to play the *shakuhachi*, he should obtain permission from the main temple. Only samurai are allowed to play *shakuhachi* and become *komusô*.
11. If a *komusô* is aware of a *komusô* conspiracy, he should report it at once to the authorities. The participants, including the main temple and the *bansô*, will be punished severely.
12. When a *komusô* is practising *takuhatsu*, he may have with him no more than one fellow *komusô* as his mate.
13. A *komusô* should not extort donations or lodging accommodation from the poor. In addition, feasts, banquets and...³³
14. When a *komusô* chances upon one of his enemies, they should both agree to ask for permission from the main temple to be relieved from their *komusô* status. They should duel on the temple's grounds. The duelers are not allowed to receive any external reinforcements. Only samurai are allowed to behave thus.
15. If a samurai enters the temple's grounds carrying a sword dripping with blood, the temple authorities should first interrogate him, and then offer him refuge. If a samurai has precedents, he should not hide his past deeds, because if his sins are made known in the future, he will no longer receive protection from the temple.
16. A *komusô* may kill his enemies but is not allowed to participate in group-fighting. He is allowed to have only one fellow *komusô* with him during the fight. Only samurai are allowed to behave thus.
17. A *komusô* is not allowed to ride a horse or use a palanquin during his itinerancy, in order to avoid facing too many people.
18. When a *komusô* arrives at the borderland of a country, he should politely demonstrate his credentials, which were given by the main temple and be allowed to pass freely. If a *komusô* avoids passing by the official checkpoint, he should be interrogated. Be prudent and respect the regulations!
19. When a *komusô* practices *takuhatsu* outside his territory in a castle town, he should not stay there for more than seven days. During his *takuhatsu* practice

³³ Missing *kanji* in the original Japanese preclude further translation of this provision. A provision in another version, which begins exactly the same, continues as follows: "In addition, feasts, banquets and gambling. He should also not accept bribes. A *komusô* who transgresses these rules will not be allowed to remain a *komusô*. His *honsoku* (credentials) will be taken away." (Takahashi 1990:58-59)

he should never play secular music or popular tunes. He is not allowed to participate in any artistic activities.

20. When a *komusô* is practicing *takuhatsu*, he should not use a shakuhachi that is shorter than one *shaku* (30.3 cm) and eight *sun* (1/10 of [a] *shaku*) in length, nor play different pieces than those prescribed.
21. *Komusô* discipline has been established for all samurai under the sun. Do not forget the right path of chivalry, because at every moment a *komusô* can again become a samurai. Learn the priest trade, and in your heart enhance chivalry. Remember that this is a religious sect for the bushido. Hence you are granted to travel freely throughout the country.

(Translated by Takahashi 1990:55-67)

The first authenticated communication from the Shogunate to the Fuke sect (in contrast to the unauthenticated *Keichô no okitegaki*) was addressed to the two temples Ichigetsuji and Reihôji. Known as the *Enpô gonen no hatto* (延寶五年の法度, ‘Ordinance of 1677’) (reproduced in Kurihara 1918:155-156), this government directive was issued in the sixth month of the fifth year of the Enpô era (1677). It is the first concrete evidence of the recognition by the Edo government of the Fuke sect. Specifically, the edict recognizes both Ichigetsuji and Reihôji as *honzan* (本山, ‘main temple’) of the Fuke sect. By officially recognizing Ichigetsuji and Reihôji with the “Ordinance of 1677”, the Shogunate confirmed the existence of the Fuke sect though the sect probably existed well before official recognition was given it in 1677. The Fuke sect acted as the sole legal representative of all *komusô* from this date until abolishment of the sect two centuries later, in 1871.

The “Ordinance of 1677” instructed the Fuke sect in three matters: Firstly, it told the main and branch temples how they were to choose head priests. Secondly, it stipulated how new members were to be selected, including what credentials they needed in order to join the sect. Finally, it dealt with the subject of members breaking the law, and with the rules of the sect. These three points became the basis of all later rules of the sect (Kamisangô 1974:17).

3.5.3 The *San'in Sangu*

After securing official recognition and patronage from the Shogunate, the Fuke sect attempted to regulate and control the *komusô* movement. The primary method of asserting the governmentally granted authority over the *komusô* was with the conferment of the *san'in sangu* (三印三具, ‘three seals’ and ‘three implements’), the certification and tools of the trade needed by *komusô*. Before receiving the *san'in sangu*, a number of requirements had to be met. First of all, proof of *samurai* status had to be produced. Also required were a “certification of non-Christian belief”, a letter of guarantee of one’s birthright from a known member of the *samurai* class, a statement giving reasons for the desire to join the Fuke sect, and a written oath that the laws of the sect be respected. Strict background checks were also made of all applicants (Sanford 1977:421; Kamisangô 1974:17).

The applicant was required to pay a once-only license fee, which varied over time, but on average totalled three hundred *hiki* in gold (三百疋, 100 *hiki* = 25 sen 錢), a substantial sum of money at the time (Nakatsuka 1979:515). The applicant then performed a contractual ceremony, swearing his sincerity before the altar of the founder of the sect. The *san'in sangu* were then presented as official recognition of the newly gained *komusô* status. The “Three Tools” were a *shakuhachi*, a *tengai* (天蓋, a basket hat) and a *kesa* (袈裟, a Buddhist priest’s stole worn over the kimono) (Kurihara 1918:158). The “Three Seals” were called *honsoku* (本則, ‘original rules’), *kaiin* (會印 ‘society seal’) and *tsûin* (通印, ‘passage seal’). *Honsoku* (reproduced in full in Kurihara 1918:159-162) outlines the basic philosophy of the *komusô* and the symbolism of the *shakuhachi* instrument. The first part of the document quotes Chapter 29 of the Chinese classic *Linji lu* (臨濟錄, J. *Rinzai roku*) about the namesake of the Fuke sect, as follows:

P’u-k’o (Puhua, J. Fuke) was always going about the streets ringing a hand-bell and saying, “If a bright-head (明頭, J. *meitô*) comes, strike the bright-head. If a dark-head (暗頭, J. *antô*) comes, strike the dark-head. Whatever direction of quarter it comes from, hit it like a whirlwind. And if it comes from emptiness, cut it down with a scythe”.

Lin-chi (Linji) sent one of his attendants to have a little talk with P’u-k’o. When he arrived, the attendant spoke the lines he had been given [by Lin-chi], “What do you do when absolutely nothing at all comes forth?”

P’u-k’o pushed the question aside saying, “Tomorrow there’s a meager feast at the Ta-pei yuan” (大悲院, Dabei yaun, J. Daihiin).

The attendant returned to Lin-chi and made his report. Lin-chi said, “I’ve had my suspicions about that fellow for a long time.”

(translated by Sanford 1977:439)

Honsoku continues with a second section, which encapsulates the philosophy of the Fuke sect in a description of the instrument and a short poem, as follows:

The *shakuhachi* is an instrument of the Dharma (法器, *hōki*). There are numerous meanings in the *shakuhachi*. It is made with three nodes (of bamboo) and always with two sections, long and short. Each of its features manifests something. The three joints are the Three Powers [Heaven, Earth and Man]. The two holes, upper and lower, are the Sun and the Moon. The five holes, front and back, are the Five Elements. It is the profound source of all creation. Playing [the *shakuhachi*] imparts the Dharma of the Myriad Things. One’s ego dissolves into darkness and the objective realm and the [subjective] heart/mind become oneness.

The *tengai* (‘basket hat’) is a thing that is endowed with the sublime Body of the Buddha. Therefore our sect is modeled with that in mind.

Sacred mountain, one moon's reflection
Illuminating the myriad schools.
Puhua, a solitary wind of virtue
Perfumes the three kingdoms.³⁴

Shimôsa *kuni* [province], Katsushika *gun* [county], Kazahaya *sô* [village],
Kogane.

Kinryûzan Bairin'in (金龍山梅林院), Ichigetsuji [temple seal]
[Bearer's] Religious name [Seal] [Bearer's] Name [Seal]

(translation by Lee)

A translation given by Sanford (1977:422) is the only other English translation of *honsoku* of the Fuke sect. There are several major discrepancies in Sanford's translation of this important document. In the fourth sentence of his translation, Sanford adds the following words: "The [differentiation between the four] upper and [one] lower fingerholes represents the sun and the moon". He then notes that the four upper fingerholes being "made to represent collectively the archetypically unitary sun" is "somewhat forced".

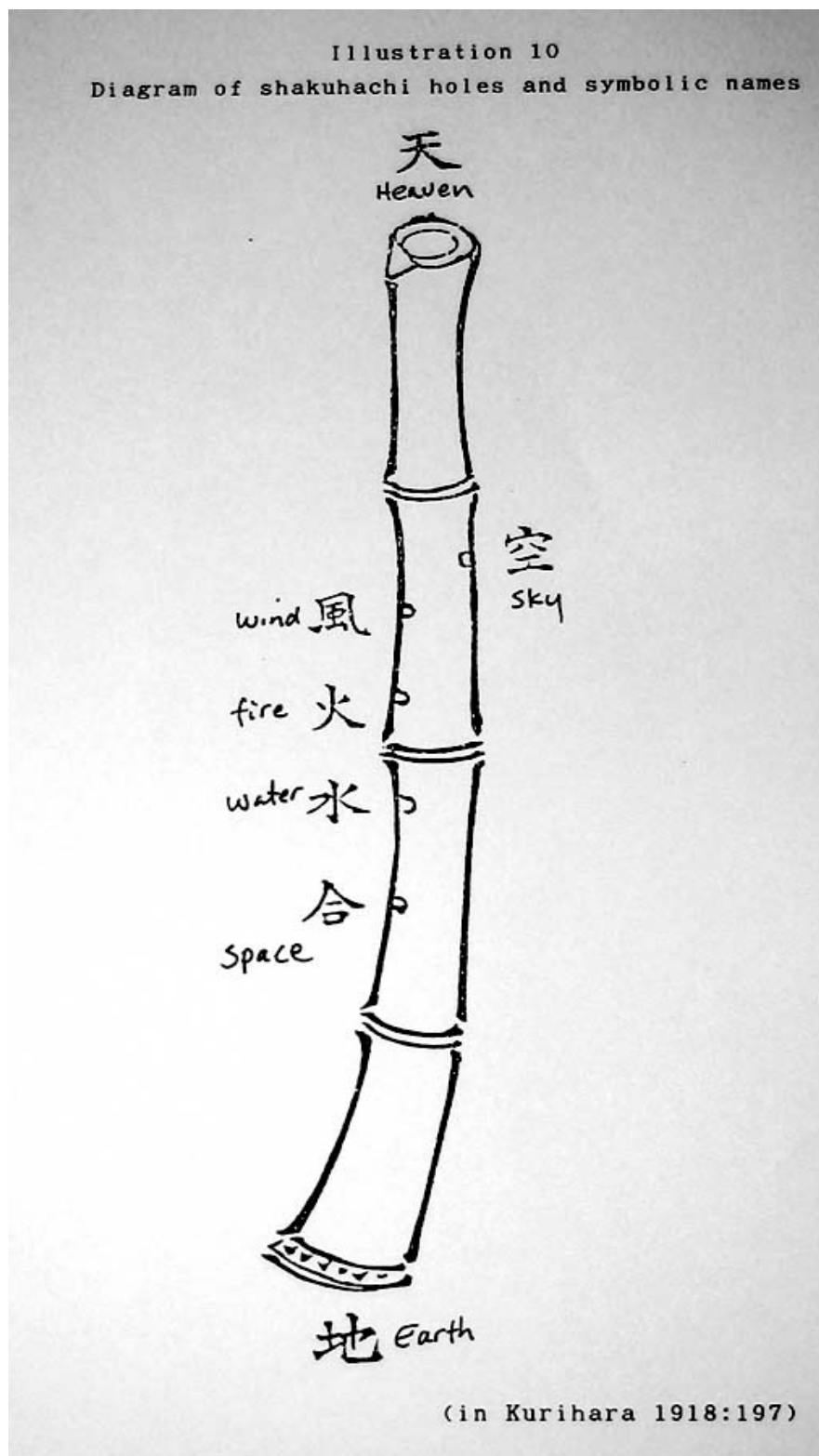
Contrary to Sanford's translation, there is no mention of fingerholes in the original text (上下之二竅者日月也, 'the two holes, upper and lower, represent the sun and the moon'). The "two holes, upper and lower" are the top hole (mouthpiece) and the very bottom hole of the flute. In a diagram of the *shakuhachi* in the book *Shakuhachi tsûzoku shû* (尺八通俗集, 'Popular Collection for the Shakuhachi' 1769), by Kinko I, these holes are labelled heaven and earth (see [Illustration 10](#)). An untitled document of the period states that the top hole of the *shakuhachi* represents the sun because it is round, while the bottom hole, when viewed through the middle of the *shakuhachi* (looking down the bore of the flute from the mouthpiece,) has the shape of a half

³⁴ Sanford translates the poem as follows:

Above the holy mountain, a singular moon,
Its light reflected in myriad streams.
P'u-k'o [Puhua] was a solitary wind
Whose virtue still perfumes
the three kingdoms.

In the original text, there is no word corresponding to the word "still" included in Sanford's translation. Sanford (1977:422-423) explains the meaning of the poem as follows: "The poem begins with the standard Buddhist metaphor of the moon as a Noumenal Reality which reflects its image in numberless phenomenal realities, though 'myriad streams' no doubt also refers to the sub-temples and sub-sects of the 'Single Moon Temple' (Ichigetsuji). Puhua, like the moon, is presented as a figure of solitary purity whose essence permeates the world (*sanzhou* [J. *sanshû*], 三州)." See pp. [234-235](#) for another example of moon symbolism in *shakuhachi* literature.

moon, thus representing the heavens (Nakatsuka 1979:475). With a typically bent or curved *shakuhachi*, the bend in the bamboo would create the half-moon shape of the bottom hole when viewed from the mouthpiece end.



Sanford (1977:422) also names the “Five Elements” as Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Space. He notes that these are the five elements of Indian Buddhism and thus are more likely in the Zen context of the Fuke sect, though the text uses the words *wu xing* (五行, *gogyô*), which normally signify the five elements of early Chinese cosmology: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water. According to Kinko I’s diagram, the five elements are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space (see [Illustration 10](#)). Nakatsuka (1979:475) quotes an untitled Edo document as stating that the front four fingerholes also represent the four seasons, while the back fingerhole represents midsummer (土用, *doyô*).

Finally, it is difficult to understand how Sanford arrived at his translation of the second sentence of the section concerning the *tengai*: “The *tengai* hat is an implement of adornment of the *Buddha-kaya*. It is an item of clothing authorized to our sect [alone]” (Sanford 1977:422). The original Japanese is as follows: 夫天蓋者莊嚴仏身之具也。故我門準擬之也。

The second document of the *san’in*, called the *kaiin*, documented the identity of the bearer and certified membership in the Fuke sect. *Kaiin* had to be renewed every six months by one of the main temples, making it one of the sect’s primary sources of authority over the *komusô* (Sanford 1977:423), as well as one source of income. The fee for renewing one’s six month licence was twenty *momme* (匁, 1 *momme* = 3.75 grams) in silver (Nakatsuka 1979:515). The third document, the *tsûin*, was a travel pass which the *komusô* needed in his journeys throughout Japan. Together with *sangu*, the possession of *san’in* was supposed to be concrete proof that one was a member of the Fuke sect and not a beggar or thief in disguise (Kamisanô 1974:17; Sanford 1977:423).

3.5.4 The Organization and Activities of the Fuke Sect

There were originally only two ranks of members of the Fuke sect, *kyôgai* (境界) and *jûshoku* (住職). Most of the members were the wandering *komusô*, who were called *kyôgai* (境界, literally ‘a boundary’; in Buddhist terminology meaning ‘the realm of objective reality’). Unlike the *kyôgai*, who were not fully ordained Buddhist priests, the second rank of members were ordained and lived in the temples. They were called *jûjishoku* (住持職, ‘office of the head priest’) or simply *jûshoku* (住職) (Kamisanô 1974:17; Sanford 1977:424).³⁵ Kamisanô (1974:17) lists six other ranks within the Fuke sect organization besides the *jûshoku*, as follows: the *indai* (院代, second ranking priest and representative of the *jûshoku*); the *shutsuyaku* (出役, priest who made official visits to other temples; the *kanshu* (看守, also read *kansu*, a

³⁵ According to Sanford (1977:424), the term *kanju* (看主) is synonymous with *jûjishoku*, even though Imaeda (1962:251) uses *kanju* as an equivalent to *kyôgai*. Nakatsuka (1979:514) differentiates *kanju* from *jûshoku*, stating that only the *jûshoku* could issue *honsoku*, while the *kanjû* could not. Nakatsuka (1979:525) also states that *jûshoku* had to take the tonsure, while *kanju* did not.

jailer/disciplinarian); the *yakusô* (役僧, an officiating priest); the *rusui* (留守居, the caretaker); and the *montei* (門弟, the ‘disciples’, i.e., the *komusô*).

Sanford (1977:424-425) does not mention these six ranks, but lists five other ranks. *Jizume* (寺詰, literally ‘appointment to the temple’) and *tsumeai* (詰合, literally ‘co-worker’) were permanent, lesser resident monks of the large temples. Monks attached to the temples but residing elsewhere were called *honsoku*, after the first “seal”. Finally, there were two designations that were in principle prohibited by law, but were common nonetheless. *Shûen josui* (宗縁助吹, literally ‘assistant player associated with the sect’) were ‘temporary *komusô*’, commoners who could not join the sect but wished to study the *shakuhachi*. The *shûen josui* were granted temporary, limited membership permits with specific expiration dates. *Kaido* (海道, literally ‘ocean path’) were personal disciples to individual *komusô* and constituted the second prohibited rank.

All ranks mentioned above can be divided into two major categories, those monks who were residents of a temple and those who were, for the most part, mendicant. The latter constituted the majority of the rank and file members of the Fuke sect. Sanford (1977:424) suggests that the disjunction between the two and the inability of the temple establishment to fully control the wandering *kyôgai* was a major cause of the eventual demise of the sect.

The monks residing in the temples followed a routine similar to that found in other Buddhist sects, with an additional focus on playing the *shakuhachi* as *suizen*. Kamisangô (1974:17) describes a typical day in a Fuke temple as follows:

In the morning, before dawn, the *yakusô* played the piece “*Kakusei rei*” (覚醒鈴, literally ‘Awakening Bell’), signalling everyone to awake. All would gather before the altar, and as a morning ritual, would play the piece “*Chôka*” (朝課, ‘Morning Theme’). Then they would do morning *zazen* (seated meditation). In the middle of the day, time would be set aside for *shakuhachi* practice as well as *budôshûren* (武道修練, the practice of martial arts), and begging for alms. In the evening, the piece “*Banka*” (晩課, ‘Evening Theme’) was ritually performed, followed by evening *zazen*. When a secret ceremony was performed in the middle of night, pieces such as “*Shin’ya*” (深夜, ‘Deep Night’) or “*Reibo*” (鈴慕, ‘Yearning for the Bell’) were performed at the beginning of the ceremony.

(translated by Lee 1986:54)

Certain formalities were to be observed while on pilgrimages. The *tengai* covered the entire head of the *komusô* (see [Illustration 11](#), top, second from left figure), and not only signified his non-attachment to identity or ego, but allowed him to remain silent as much as possible. In answer to questions of his destination, the *komusô* replied, “the one place of non-dwelling” (一所不住, *issho fujû*),³⁶ or “Whatever direction or

³⁶ In Buddhist terms, the phrase “*issho fujû*” means the ‘state of non-attachment to any sensory, intellectual or emotional object’ (Sanford 1977:426).

quarter”.³⁷ Questions as to his name or identity were to be answered only with the name of his temple and his religious name, or with the question “What can you ask of one who consists of voidness wrapped up in the form of a body, and who carries the *shakuhachi* of infinite emptiness?” Further inquiries were to be met by backing away and waving his flute at those asking the questions (Sanford 1977:426).

Particular pieces were also to be performed while traveling as mendicant priests. While walking down the road, the piece “*Tôri*” (通り, ‘Passing’) was performed. When stopped before a house or establishment in order to beg for alms, the high pitched piece “*Kadotsuke*” (門付, ‘At the Gate’) was performed to draw attention to those within. After pouring the bowl (called *hachi* 鉢) of uncooked rice into a special pouch and returning the empty bowl back to the donator, the *komusô* would perform the intense piece “*Hachigaeshi*” (鉢返し, ‘Returning the Bowl’) as an expression of his intense gratitude for the life-sustaining donation.

The first *komusô* to see a fellow *komusô* on the road was to play “*Yobitake*” (呼竹, ‘Calling Bamboo’) while still walking toward him. The piece “*Yobitake*” is almost entirely in the upper register, the high pitches suited to a “calling” piece. The second *komusô* was then to reply, also without stopping, with the piece “*Uketake*” (受竹, ‘Receiving Bamboo’). This piece, in contrast to “*Yobitake*”, is in the lower register, and consists of very long and complex phrases, as if in answer to the challenge of the “caller”. When the two came together, the piece “*Gutai kyoku*” (遇対曲, ‘Meeting Face to Face Piece’) was played in unison, with the “caller” playing in the lower register and the “receiver” playing in the upper register. Requests for lodging at a *komusô* temple were to be made by performing the piece “*Monkai no kyoku*” (門開の曲, ‘Gate Opening Piece’).

According to Tukitani (1990b:51), pieces performed ritualistically or in the context of spiritual training differ from pieces played during pilgrimages or free time. Pieces used in the temples are austere, highly formal and serene, while pieces played on the road generally are much more elaborate, and have been modified to a greater degree. Examples of the formal pieces are “*Kyorei*” (虚霊, or 虚鈴, ‘Empty Bell’), “*Kokû*” (虚空, ‘Empty Sky’), and “*Mukaiji*” (霧海簫, ‘Flute in a Misty Sea’), the three most venerated pieces in the *koten honkyoku* repertoire. An outstanding example of a piece performed on the road is “*Reibo*” of the Ôshû lineage (see Chapter 4).

The two contexts in which pieces were performed, that is, “a strictly ceremonial context and the loosely prescribed context of pilgrimage” may explain some of the variations in the names of the piece “*Reibo*”. The variant name *Reihô*, especially when written with the characters 礼法 (manner+ritual) may refer to the ceremonial context, and the variant name *Renbo* (恋慕, ‘Intense Yearning or Longing’) may connote the non-formal context. The standard name “*Reibo*” (鈴慕, ‘Yearning for the Bell’) could be identified with either context, though the history and form of the piece seems to suggest the context of pilgrimage (Tukitani 1990b:51).

³⁷ This refers to the words of Puhua (J. Fuke) as quoted in Chapter 29 of the *Linji Lu* (J. *Rinzai roku*).

The members of the Fuke sect have left us with very little written material elucidating the philosophy which underlay their playing *shakuhachi* as *suizen*, blowing Zen, the *honkyoku* presumably speaking for themselves. Kinko I is said to have verbalized the concept of *suizen* with short pronouncements such as *ichi on jôbutsu* (一音成仏, ‘one-sound Buddhahood’), *chikuzen ichi’nyo* (竹禅一如, ‘bamboo and Zen are one’) (Gutzwiller 1984:241). The only writings on the subject by a member of the Fuke sect in existence today (Gutzwiller 1984:241) are three short essays by Hisamatsu Fûyô (久松風陽, ca.1790-1845), entitled *Hitori kotoba* (獨言, ‘Words to Oneself’), *Hitori mondô* (獨問答, ‘Questions and Answers to Oneself’) and *Kaisei hôgo* (海靜法語, ‘Ocean Calm Sermon’). Hisamatsu, a samurai working for the Tokugawa government, became the main player of the Kinko lineage within the Fuke sect after the death of his teacher, Kinko III. His two top students, Yoshida Itchô (吉田一調, 1812-1881) and Araki Kodô (荒木古童, 1823-1908), were instrumental in the survival of the *shakuhachi* as a musical instrument after the Meiji era (see p.145).

The theme of detachment from this world is evident in the simple manner in which the *komusô* was to be buried if he died while on pilgrimage. In the *Kyotaku denki kokuji kai* (see pp.36-39), Kusunoki Masakatsu, the traditional founder of Reihôji (see p.121) is quoted as saying:

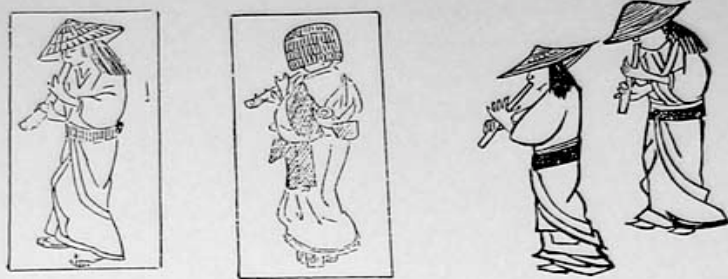
When a fellow-priest [of this sect] dies, he must be seated on his *fukusu* (副子, the *komusô*’s bedroll), covered with a large piece of cloth, tied with a rope, and buried. His tombstone is to be made of the board called *kenkonbari*.³⁸ The *kyotaku* [alias for *shakuhachi*] will be performed as the funeral service. This ritual will be the single highest wish for a priest dying in his itinerancy.

(translated by Tsuge 1977:52)

Numerous extant drawings of the *komusô* during the Edo period help provide a picture of their appearance and lifestyle (see [Illustration 11](#) for six examples of these drawings). The evolution of the *tengai* from a shallow, wide-rimmed straw hat to a deep, basket-shaped hat which covered the entire face can be seen. Illustration 12 shows a courtesan holding a *shakuhachi*, and two of what Sanford (1977:425) calls “*komusô* dandies”, who appeared in the late Edo period. Dressed only for effect, they are indicative of the decline of the authority and effectiveness of the Fuke sect as a political and spiritual organization. The final demise of the sect is discussed in the next section.

³⁸ 乾坤張り, literally ‘heaven earth placard’. The *kenkonbari* was a small signboard which the *komusô* wore on his chest. On one side of the placard was written *kenkonbari*, and on the other side were the words *fusei fumetsu* (不生不滅, non-born, non-dying). This phrase is potent with meaning in Zen Buddhist tradition. The ‘non-born, non-dying’ can refer to the Buddha-nature that is found anywhere one may look, including paradoxically, all that is impermanent.

Illustration 11
Six examples of Edo period drawings of komusô



(in Kurihara 1918:177)



(in Ueno 1984:244-246)

Illustration 12
Komusô 'dandies'



(in Ueno 1984:272)

3.5.5 The Decline and Demise of the Fuke Sect

Indications of a decline in the official status of the Fuke sect are evident from the latter 18th century, and into the 19th century, culminating in the complete abolition of the sect by the *bakufu* in 1847. Furthermore, an increase in secular activities by the

Fuke sect and some of its members is evident during this same period. The decline and eventual demise of the sect is outlined below.

According to the theory discussed above (p.116), the Tokugawa *bakufu* granted recognition and special privileges to the Fuke sect firstly as a method of asserting indirect authority over the uncontrollable numerous *rônin*, and, secondly, as a means of recruiting and placing spies throughout the land. It seems likely that the *bakufu* was not deceived by the members of the Fuke sect, who forged documents such as *Keicho no okitegaki* (see pp.115-122) and *Kyotaku denki* (p.36) in order to receive official recognition and special privileges. Recognition was granted to the sect because it was politically suitable at the time, not because of any sense of propriety or obligation.

Throughout the history of the Fuke sect, there were bonefide practitioners of *suizen* who were continuing a tradition at least as old as 14th century Ikkyû Zenji. The large repertoire of *koten honkyoku* (古典本曲, classical honkyoku)³⁹ and the philosophy behind them are the legacy of these persons. There were *komusô*, however, whose antisocial behavior clearly indicated motivations other than spiritual enlightenment for their involvement with the Fuke sect. As outlined above (pp.108-109), the mendicant lifestyle, the special privileges, in particular the freedom of travel, and the dress and anonymous manner of the *komusô*, under which one's identity could be easily hidden, all contributed to attracting those who might wish to break the law for whatever reason.

The very nature of the institution of the *komusô* encouraged individuality and freedom from outside authority. This made it difficult for the Fuke temples to control even their own itinerant members, not to mention the increasing numbers of those masquerading as *komusô*. Furthermore, after over two hundred years of peace and stability, the government's need for the network of spies provided by the sect may have declined. The sect began to be seen as a liability not worth maintaining. The sudden increase in frequency and severity of written admonitions issued to the sect by the government from the late 18th century onwards indicates the problems facing the Fuke sect at the time.

In one of the first such admonitions, dated 1774, the Shogunate pronounced that it would take severe measures against extortionists disguised as *komusô* and against *komusô* who did not uphold the law (see Kurihara 1918:167 for a reproduction of the edict). The Fuke sect responded by attempting to restore some of the discipline that existed in the past. It was at this point in time that major documents appear in which the Fuke sect tried to maintain its privileged status and improve its public image. One such document is the *Kyotaku denki koku jikai* (Yamamoto 1795), a lyrical description of a glorified history of the sect. As stated above (pp.37-39), this book purports to be an annotation of the *Kyotaku denki*, which was supposedly written in the early 1600s. Both the book and its annotation, however, were probably fabricated at the same time (Kurihara 1918:108-109; Nakatsuka 1979:130-131; Nishiyama 1982a:140; Kamisangô 1974:14-16).

³⁹ This term refers to *honkyoku* that originated with the *komusô* or their predecessors, in contrast to "modern" *honkyoku*, composed during the 20th and 21st centuries.

Also written around the time the *bakufu* began questioning the advantages of continued recognition of the Fuke sect, were those versions of the *Keichô no okitegaki* which list the greatest number of special privileges (Kamisangô 1974:17). These expanded versions were, like the *Kyotaku denki koku jikai*, attempts to enhance the status and authority of the sect in the eyes of the *bakufu*. Another attempt at public-relations damage control took place in 1841, when Ichigetsuji and Reihôji made a submission to the governmental Council of Temples and Shrines, reaffirming the true spiritual nature of the sect (Kurihara 1918:168).

All of the effort to maintain the official recognition and status of the sect was to be of no avail. There finally came a time when the benefits to the *bakufu* were far outweighed by the disadvantages of allowing the Fuke sect to retain its special privileges. In 1847, the government issued a *furegaki* (触書, ‘circulated official announcements’, frequently posted on public announcement boards throughout the country), unequivocally stating that the privileges of the Fuke sect, as stated in the *Keichô no okitegaki*, were no longer valid and should have never been granted in the first place. The announcement revoked the rule that only those of *samurai* birth could join the sect. Since the Fuke sect was under the auspices of the Rinzaï sect of Zen Buddhism, which anyone could join regardless of birth, it was argued by the *bakufu* that the same criteria for membership should apply to the Fuke sect. Furthermore, the announcement stated that the members of the sect did not require special privileges to exercise their spiritual practices, but they did need to cultivate charity of the heart (Kamisango 1974:18).

Without the special privileges and exclusivity granted by the *Keichô no okitegaki*, the Fuke sect lost most of its authority and prestige. Attempts were again made to reform and revitalize the sect, but to no avail. If the *bakufu* of the Edo period saw little reason for the continued existence of the sect, the new Meiji (明治) government saw none at all. In October 1871, three years after overthrowing the nearly three hundred year old *bakufu*, the new government issued a *dajôkan fukoku* (太政官布告, a cabinet decree), which formally abolished the Fuke sect (Kurihara 1918:175-176). All of the *komusô* temples were closed and the priests became lay persons. A year later, begging for alms became illegal, as was playing the *shakuhachi* as a spiritual tool (法器, hôki).

The *shakuhachi* playing *komusô* and their organization, the Fuke sect, was not alone in having official recognition abruptly terminated by the new Meiji government. Other monopolistic guilds, such as the guilds of blind *koto* and *jiuta* players, were also abolished (Kamisangô 1980:100) as part of a rush to modernize and westernize the country. The *heikyoku* tradition of *biwa* playing was effectively destroyed during this period. The *Nô* theatre tradition barely survived. There were also attacks on other establishments of power, including Buddhist temples, that had been patronized by the old Tokugawa region.

One of the early Meiji slogans was “Sweep aside the Buddha, smash Buddhism” (排仏釈, *haibutsu kishaku*). In fact, even from the Genroku period (1688), the Buddhist establishment had not been popular in Japan, and its continued existence was mainly due to governmental patronage. It is clear from the contemporary literature that “the [Buddhist] clergy were disliked among the commoners and

despised by men of learning” (Sanson 1952:480). The Meiji Restoration may have merely allowed long-held sentiments to surface.

Furthermore, as Gutzwiller (1984:240) points out, “whatever the conduct of its members, no group which had close connections to the *bakufu* could have survived its fall and the profound changes which placed the power in the hands of politicians loyal to the new emperor. Although lawlessness was a general problem during the late Tokugawa period, it seems that at least some of the offences the Fuke sect was charged with were a pretext to get rid of an organization with strong ties to the *ancien regime*”.

It is clear that a number of elements made the Meiji government’s decision to ban the Fuke sect inevitable. After the final cabinet decree in 1871, the demise of the Fuke sect and the *komusô* seemed complete, especially in the Edo area. Reihôji became an informal playground and storage depot. Its decayed buildings were destroyed in a fire in 1893. Ichigetsuji and its landholdings were divided and sold. The temple became part of the Shingon sect, and the land was eventually purchased by the Sôka Gakkai, the political wing of a new Buddhist sect (Fujita 1970:6).

3.6 The *Shakuhachi* as a Secular Musical Instrument

The total collapse of the Fuke sect, the destruction of its temples and the prohibition of alms begging did not result in the demise of the use of the *shakuhachi* as an instrument. On the contrary, its popularity increased after the Meiji proscription of 1871. Two reasons may be given for this. First of all, the *shakuhachi* continued to be performed as a secular musical instrument during the Edo era in contravention to the monopolistic tenets of the Fuke sect, just as it had been used in non-religious contexts before the Edo period.

It must be remembered that before governmental recognition of *Keichô no okitegaki* and tacit approval of the monopoly claimed by the Fuke sect, the *shakuhachi* had been used in secular music contexts from the time of its first introduction into Japan as part of the *gagaku* ensemble, and continuing throughout its history in such traditions as *dengaku* (see p.74). There is much evidence that the instrument continued to be used in musical contexts other than spiritual ones and by persons other than members of the Fuke sect even after such uses became illegal (Nakatsuka 1979:438; Ueno 1984:269)). After the demise of the Fuke sect, its popularity as a secular musical instrument increased legally and openly.

Literary evidence of the use of the *shakuhachi* in secular settings can be found in the book *Gayû manroku* (雅遊漫録, ‘Random Comments on Elegant Entertainment’, 1755): “Nowadays, typically the *shakuhachi* is a long, thick instrument. It is tuned with the *shamisen*, and in this way, its pitch has become quite low. Its voice is the height of licentiousness” (Ueno 1984:293). Pictorial evidence can be found in the book *Uta keizu* (歌系図, ‘A Genealogy of Songs’, 1782), which contains a drawing of an on-stage performance of *shakuhachi*, *koto* and *shamisen*, the components of the *sankyoku* ensemble (Ueno 1984:292) (see [Illustration 13](#)). Also, in the book *Yamato*

kôsaku e shô (大和耕作絵抄, ‘Summary of Yamato Cultivating Pictures’), compiled in the late 17th century, is a drawing of eight dancers being accompanied by four musicians playing *shakuhachi*, *shamisen* and two drums (Ueno 1984:293). The dress and position of the dancers, as well as the instrumentation of the music ensemble indicate a performance of *min’yô* (民謡, folk music), and accompanying dance (see [Illustration 14](#)).

In 1694, a set of regulations was issued by Myôanji, entitled *Honsoku deshi e môshi watashi sadame* (本則弟子江申渡定, ‘Announcement of Regulations for Disciples of the “First Seal”’) (reproduced in Nakatsuka 1979:166-169). The announcement clearly forbids the playing of “corrupt pieces” (乱曲, *rankyoku*, i.e., popular pieces performed in ensemble with the *koto* and *shamisen*) (Nakatsuka 1979:169). According to Kamisangô (1974:18), that this rule was issued at all indicates that such practices were widespread.

Two inquiries by the government to the Fuke temples, and responses thereto, further show the extent of *shakuhachi* usage in secular music contexts. The *bakufu* asked the temples in 1792 if it was a good thing that *shakuhachi* was being performed together with *shamisen* and *kokyû* (胡弓, a bowed lute). The temples replied, “It really is something which should not be done. The people are misbehaving, but they are doing it privately. If we cannot hear it, there is no way for us to scrutinize it”. In 1847, the government again inquired, “The playing, as entertainment, of *shakuhachi* with *shamisen*, etc., in ensemble occurs; is this all right with the Fuke sect?” The temples replied, “It is deplorable and very bothersome” (Kamisangô 1974:18).

The second reason for the continued popularity of *shakuhachi* after the dissolution of the Fuke sect in 1871 is that the monopoly of its use by the Fuke sect was never strictly enforced. Despite the claim by the Fuke sect that its members had the exclusive right to play the *shakuhachi*, the instrument was, in fact, played by non-members, including commoners, whether in a spiritual or a secular context. Evidence of the use of *shakuhachi* by non-Fuke sect members and even commoners not only occurring but actually being condoned by the Fuke sect can found as early as 1658, in a set of regulations issued by Myôanji,

Illustration 13
Edo period sankyoku performance



(In Ueno 1984:293)

Illustration 14
Edo period min'yo performance



(In Ueno 1984:292)

entitled *Kakun nijūsanka jō* (家訓二十三ヶ条, ‘Twenty-three Rules of the House’) (reproduced in Nakatsuka 1979:151-161).⁴⁰ One of the “rules” states, “for the present, there is meaning in making contact with farmers and townspeople who are not engaging in foul play, to the degree that profit [for the individual] is not the concern” (Nakatsuka 1979:157). According to Kamisangō (1974:18), this rather vague statement really meant that the temple sanctioned the teaching of farmers and commoners if the temple itself also stood to gain financially, through such means as donations and the selling of licenses.

The previously mentioned set of regulations entitled *Honsoku deshi e môshi watashi sadame* (1694) differentiates between *komusô* living in temples and those residing in towns, and mentions places other than temples where *shakuhachi* was taught and licences were issued, no doubt to non-members of the sect, including commoners.

In 1759, the Shogunate conducted an investigation of the practice of issuing special licences, called *suichiku mei* (吹竹名, ‘blowing bamboo name’) or simply *chiku mei* (竹名, ‘bamboo name’), to commoners by Reihôji, one of the main Fuke temples (Kurihara 1918:165-166). The licences were essentially identical to *honsoku* (see p.123), except that they could be held by non-priests and commoners, and were an excellent source of income for the temple. In defense of these licences, Reihôji argued that they resembled the naming licences given to composers of *haiku* (俳句, 17 syllable poems) and were therefore acceptable. The government, observing the fact that Ichigetsuji did not issue such licences, severely reprimanded Reihôji (Kamisangō 1974:18).

There is other evidence that the upper echelon of the Fuke sect, especially at the Edo temples Ichigetsuji and Reihôji, may have done far less to support the sect’s monopoly over the use of the *shakuhachi* than might be expected. According to Sanford (1977:429), the ability to play *shakuhachi* was not an important qualification for acquiring residence status or even becoming head abbot at these two temples. Furthermore, the establishment of outside teaching locations was a method devised by the two temples to farm out *shakuhachi* instruction “so as to avoid being bothered with this chore any more than was absolutely necessary”.

Kamisangō (1974:18) defends the actions of the temple authorities, stating that it was natural that some *komusô* were better players than others, and that these more skilful players were given the task of teaching the less experienced. Ironically, a consequence of this delegation of the teaching of *shakuhachi* by the Fuke temples was the eventual establishment of teaching studios outside the temple grounds. This in turn led to the dissemination of the *shakuhachi* tradition to the general public and, consequently, to the survival of that tradition after the downfall of the Fuke sect.

The teaching, which involved many of the officiating priests of the temples, was called *fukiawase* (吹合, literally ‘blowing together’).⁴¹ At first, teaching was done in the temples themselves, but as the sect’s restrictions regarding the teaching of

⁴⁰ Kamisangō (1974:18) incorrectly states that this document has thirty-three rules.

⁴¹ The term *fukiawase* also denoted the teachers themselves.

townspeople were lessened, outside teaching locations were established. Whatever the reason for their establishment, the number of these locations, also called *fukiawase* or *fukiawase jo* (吹合所, literally ‘blowing together places’), increased, so that by 1792, according to a response to yet another government inquiry, nineteen persons were listed as living in houses in Edo and teaching *shakuhachi*.

A directive issued by Myôanji in Kyôto in 1852 entitled *Kenbunyaku nari fukiawase chû e tasshigaki* (見聞役為吹合中江達書, ‘Notification for Information Officers in the *fukiawase*’) (reproduced in Nakatsuka 1979:211-212) stated that certain *kenbunyaku* (provincial representatives of the Fuke sect in charge of taking care of problem *komusô*) were also teaching in *fukiawase* or teaching studios (see below) in addition to their main duties. The notice continued with, “The *fukiawase* is an extension of the temple. Therefore, pieces other than those transmitted by the temple are not to be taught there. They are not to be called *keikojo* (稽古所, ‘practice place’), or *shi’nanjo* (指南所, ‘instruction place’).⁴²

After the closure of the Fuke temples and with the Fuke priests becoming laymen in 1871, the *shakuhachi* instructors who were established at the various *fukiawase sho* were ideally situated to continue their teaching activities as gainful employment. There was even more incentive to do so when begging for alms was prohibited a year later. These instructors, their teaching studios, and their students became the basis for the resurgence of *shakuhachi* as a secular musical tradition. Two men in particular were instrumental in this transition. Both Araki Kodô (荒木古童, 1832-1908) and Yoshida Itchô (吉田一調, 1812-1881) were students of Hisamatsu Fûyô (see p.132), belonging to a lineage of *shakuhachi* players who traced themselves back to Kurosawa Kinko I (黒沢琴古, 1710-1771), himself a teacher at *fukiawase jo* outside the temple grounds.

Kinko I, credited with originating the Kinko style of *shakuhachi* playing, was one of the skilful players that, according to Kamisangô (1977:18), were given by the head Edo temples of the Fuke sect the task of teaching novices. As *fukiawase* for both of the head temples, Ichigetsuji and Reihôji, Kinko soon attracted a following. His son Kurosawa Kôemon (黒沢幸右衛門, d.1811) and grandson Kurosawa Masajirô (黒沢雅十郎, d.1816) became Kinko II and Kinko III.⁴³

In other words, Kurosawa Kinko I, as well as his son and grandson, were professional teachers of *shakuhachi*, who taught the instrument outside the grounds of the temples of the Fuke sect, in what could even be described as an act of commerce disguised as religion. The institution of the *fukiawase jo* gave them and their successors a superbly suitable foundation from which to continue transmitting their style of *shakuhachi* playing even after the destruction of the Fuke organization.

During their time, the Kinko lineage was not an independent school of *shakuhachi*, but was a style of playing with a set repertoire, which Kinko I had initiated and his

⁴² The terms *keikojo* and *shi’nanjo* were used to denote places where the *koto* and/or *shamisen* were taught.

⁴³ Sanford (1977:431) incorrectly states that Kinko III was Hisamatsu Fûyô.

successors transmitted. This transmission technically occurred within the Fuke sect until its dissolution. Thereafter, transmission continued within the Kinko *ryû*.

Soon after the abolition of the Fuke sect, the two previously mentioned *shakuhachi* players, Araki and Yoshida, convinced the Meiji government that its further intention of banning altogether the performing of *shakuhachi*, even as a secular instrument, was neither necessary nor desirable (Kurihara 1918:109-110). Arguing that *shakuhachi* was worthy of preservation as a secular musical instrument, they encouraged and developed its use in *sankyoku* ensemble. Araki also devised the *ro tsu re* (ロツレ) notation system, after the three *kana* symbolizing the first three open-hole finger positions, which was suitable for notating *sankyoku* pieces. The *ro tsu re* notation system became the basis for the present-day Kinko notation, as well as for the notation system of today's largest *shakuhachi* school, Tozan *ryû*.

It was probably during this period that the term *honkyoku* (本曲, 'original piece') was coined to differentiate the spiritually grounded pieces of the old Fuke tradition from the ever increasing number of *shakuhachi* pieces played in ensemble with secular musical instruments such as *koto* and *shamisen*. From the turn of the 20th century the term *honkyoku* was appropriated, usually by *iemoto* of various schools of *shakuhachi* formed after the Meiji period, to mean solo *shakuhachi* pieces which they had composed, e.g., Tozan *honkyoku*. Consequently, a number of terms were coined by *shakuhachi* players wanting to differentiate the original *suizen* pieces from the newly composed *honkyoku*. Among the terms used to denote the pieces that predate the *ryû*-specific *honkyoku* are *myôan honkyoku* (明暗本曲), *tôshô honkyoku* (洞簫本曲), *fuke shû kyotaku kyoku* (普化宗虚鐸曲), *koten shakuhachi honkyoku* (古典尺八本曲), *shakuhachi koten honkyoku* (尺八古典本曲), *fuke shû honkyoku* (普化宗本曲) and *dôkyoku* (道曲) (Tukitani 1990a:4).

The ensemble pieces, not being *honkyoku* were called *gaikyoku* (外曲, 'outside pieces') (Tukitani 1990a:4). In the decades following the end of the Fuke sect, the popularity of the *shakuhachi* as a secular instrument used to perform *gaikyoku* continued to increase. Indicative of this trend is the founding and growth of the Tozan *ryû*, the largest school of *shakuhachi* players today.⁴⁴ In 1896, at the age of twenty-one, Nakao Tozan (中尾都山, 1876-1956) founded Tozan *ryû* by opening a *shakuhachi* teaching studio in Osaka. He promoted the use of the instrument in secular musical settings, including its use with western instruments such as the piano and violin. He also composed a large number of solo, duet and trio pieces, which he called *honkyoku* (see above). These pieces were in part based upon western musical harmonies and appealed to the Japanese public, which was, after two hundred years of isolation, highly appreciative of things somewhat western in flavour yet still reassuringly Japanese. Completely excluded from the Tozan repertoire were *koten honkyoku*, the original pieces of the *komusô*, which may have been too representative of the old order.

⁴⁴ In 1984, there were 4935 licensed teachers in the largest of three factions of the Tozan *ryû*. The second largest faction had 1500 members in 1976, the year it broke away from the main organization (Takahashi 1990:223). Through a politically motivated adoption and marriage, two of the factions were reunited in the late 1980s.

Nakao's school did, however, use monopolistic policies for political ends as had been done by the old Fuke sect and, to an even greater degree, the *bakufu*. As a rule, members of the Tozan school were (and in many cases still are) forbidden to learn and perform pieces other than those of the official Tozan repertoire. Highly talented players have, for example, been expelled from the sect for performing their own unauthorized compositions at official Tozan concerts (Kamisanô 1974:21). Because of this autocratic rule, the majority of *shakuhachi* players in Japan today do not openly play *honkyoku* of the *suizen* tradition.⁴⁵

It is clear that *shakuhachi* was never totally under the control of, nor dependent upon, the Fuke sect. Its popularity as a secular musical instrument was not affected adversely by the abolition of the Fuke sect. Instead of becoming extinct, *shakuhachi* continued being taught and performed not only in the secular musical contexts mentioned above, but also as a spiritual tool, albeit on a smaller scale, as will be shown below. The abolishment of the Fuke sect saw the end of an institution: the established temples, the offices of the head abbots, their administrative assistants, the conferment of the "three tools and the three seals", as well as the collection of semiannual fees and the special privileges. Neither the spiritual nor the secular musical functions of *shakuhachi* were sustained entirely by these institutional elements. Consequently, neither function was extinguished by the dissolution of the Fuke sect institution.

3.7 *Suizen* after the Abolition of the Fuke Sect

One impression given by much of the literature is that *shakuhachi* players engaged in the practice of *suizen* may have always been in the minority. During the Edo period, the hierarchy of the Fuke sect appeared too busy with furthering and protecting their privileges, influence and authority, and many of the rank and file seemed too interested in the free lifestyle of begging for alms, spying for the Shogunate or hiding from the law to seriously devote themselves to *suizen*. After the Fuke sect and the special privileges and lifestyle it offered were no more, many *komusô* may have simply abandoned the instrument. Some of those who had been teaching *shakuhachi* at the *fukiawase jo*, for example the adherents of the Kinko-style Araki and Yoshida, mentioned above, seemed intent on continuing their teaching and playing activities, but as secular musicians.

What is certain is that there were always *komusô*, however few in number, who practised *suizen* seriously; otherwise it is unlikely that the *koten honkyoku* tradition could have survived the abolishment of Fuke sect. The large repertoire of *honkyoku* that continues to be performed and transmitted today is compelling evidence that

⁴⁵ Perhaps the most enthusiastically received of Yokoyama Katsuya's recent activities are his *kôshûkai* (講習会, 'training course'), given at least twice a year in three or four locations throughout Japan. With assistance from his top students, the 3-5 day courses afford *shakuhachi* players from all lineages the opportunity to learn *koten honkyoku*. Because these *kôshûkai* are only temporary "courses", Tozan sect members, who actually predominate, may attend without threat of loss of face to their monopolistic teachers.

throughout the Edo period and even after the abolition of the Fuke sect, *shakuhachi* was played as a spiritual tool in the context of *suizen*.

During the Meiji era, the *suizen* tradition was kept alive, particularly in the Kyôto area, by former Fuke sect members whose activities had centered around the third *honzan* of the Fuke sect, Myôanji. Unlike the two Edo temples, Ichigetsuji and Reihôji, which were closed down and abandoned, Myôanji survived the 1871 abolishment of the Fuke sect, though not as a temple of the Fuke sect. Sanford gives the following as some of the reasons that Myôanji avoided the fate of its two sister temples in Edo:

A chief feature differentiating the latter history of Myôanji from that of the Kantô temples is the greater seriousness with which the Kyôto temple took the *shakuhachi* and the Zen elements of the Fuke tradition. In the later decades of the Tokugawa era, as the Edo temples generally allowed their *shakuhachi* tradition to follow a course of increasing secularization, Myôanji made serious attempts to keep its music on a high spiritual and artistic plane. The differentiation of roles—politics in Edo and art/religion in Kyoto—was probably at base the virtually inevitable outcome of the geo-political realities of the Edo era, but it is important to note that it was at Myôanji that the process of Zen assimilation of the *komusô* movement went deepest and lasted longest.

At any rate, after its reclassification as a branch temple of Kôkokuji in 1768 [see p.113], Myôanji quickly rose to prominence as an influential center of *shakuhachi* musicianship. The factors prompting Myôanji to concentrate on music (and by extension the Zen philosophy that might inform such an interest) were, in addition to the political impotence of the temple, the high-culture tradition of Kyôto and the conservative perspectives of Myôanji's leaders vis-à-vis art, religion and politics. Thus, in general, as Edo gradually became the center of a movement of popularized *shakuhachi* music, Myôanji continued to explore and refine a much more metaphysical Zen style.

(Sanford 1977:432-433)

After the abolition of the Fuke sect in 1871, Jishô Sakuhi (自笑昨非), the 34th and last abbot of Myôanji while it was a *honzan* of the Fuke sect, changed his name to Akekure Kakusaku (明暗覺昨) and became a lay person.⁴⁶ Before closing his temple and departing from priesthood, he transferred a number of Myôanji artifacts and documents to Zenneiin (善慧院), a sub-temple within the large temple complex of Tôfukuji (東福寺) for safe-keeping. Included were a statue of Kyochiku Zenji, the founder of the temple, the *kyoreizan jigaku* (虚霊山寺額, a framed tablet), the *rekidai jûshoku* (歴代住職, genealogies), the *indai* (院代, names of persons of authority) and the *kanshu no reihai* (看守の霊牌, tablets of the posthumous names of the members of the temple). These objects together became the focal point for those persons who wished to preserve the *komusô* tradition (Kamisanagô 1977:20; Ueno 1984:302).

⁴⁶ Tanabe (1954:228) incorrectly names the 34th patriarch of Myôanji as Watanabe Kakuzan (渡辺鶴山). Sanford (1977:432) incorrectly names Watanabe as the 24th abbot.

The total prohibition against begging for alms was lifted by the government in 1881, after ten years of petitioning by a number of Buddhist sects. Soon after, permission was granted to *komusô* to beg for alms as one part of a large fundraising drive for the replacement of a building other than the Myôanji *honzan* in the Tofukuji complex destroyed by fire. The Myôan *kyôkai* (明暗教会, Myôan Society) was founded, firstly to organize the fund-raising project, and ultimately to revive the *komusô* tradition as it was practiced at the old Myôanji.

There is evidence that if Myôanji was politically impotent during the Tokugawa regime, it may have been because its sympathies lay with the equally impotent political opposition, especially from the 19th century. Many of the temple members, including those in high positions within the administration, were sympathetic to the anti-government imperial loyalists. On one occasion, four Myôanji *komusô*, Ozaki Shinrû (尾崎身竜),⁴⁷ Kammyô Gendô (観妙幻堂), Myôan Sogyô (明暗素行) and Kondô Sôetsu (近藤宗悦) were arrested by agents of the Tokugawa regime as being messengers for the imperial loyalists. Shinrû was placed under house arrest. Gendô was beheaded. Sogyô was imprisoned. Sôetsu was not punished at all, due to the intervention of a high-ranking government official, Toyoda Katsugorô (豊田勝五郎). Better known as Kodô I (古董創始), a leading figure in the Kinko style of *shakuhachi* playing in Edo, Toyoda greatly respected Sôetsu's musical ability. Sôetsu later became instrumental in the secularization and modernization of the *shakuhachi* in the Kansai area during the Meiji period (Sanford 1977:432).

After the founding of the Myôan *kyôkai*, members of other former Fuke temples soon followed suit. In 1888, the Fuke *kyôkai* (普化教会) was founded at the temple, Kôkokuji. Shortly thereafter, the Myôon *kyôkai* (妙音教会) was founded at Kokutaiji (国泰寺) located in Toyama Prefecture, and the Hottô *kyôkai* (法燈教会) was founded at Myôkôji (妙光寺) in Kyôto (Kamisangô 1974:20). In 1950, the Fuke Shôshû Myôanji (普化正宗明暗寺, 'The Temple of Light and Darkness of the True Fuke Sect') was founded as the corporate body of the Myôan *kyôkai*, and a temple was rented within the Tôfukuji compounds. In 1969, the main hall of the new Myôanji was completed. The temple is today acknowledged as the main temple (本山, *honzan*) of the *suizen* tradition, regardless of lineage or *ryû* (Kamisangô 1974:20).

The *komusô* societies filled the institutional role of the former Fuke sect in a number of ways. They granted licenses and certificates similar to the old *san'in* or three seals. They also determined the dress of the *komusô* and the times and circumstances of begging for alms. There were at first even members of the societies whose only livelihood was alms received as *komusô*. The new *komusô* societies did differ from the old Fuke sect in being less exclusive; anyone could join the societies once the fees were paid. According to Kamisangô (1974:20) the early *kyôkai* movement as a whole did little to further either the artistic development or the transmission of the music. In

⁴⁷ Tanabe (1954:228) incorrectly states that Ozaki was the 35th abbot of Myôanji, and that Watanabe Kakuzan (渡辺鶴山), another imperial loyalist, was the 34th abbot (Kamisangô 1974:20). Sanford (1977:432) quotes Tanabe's error regarding Ozaki, and adds further to the confusion by misquoting Tanabe's original error, stating that Watanabe, though the teacher of Ozaki, was the 24th abbot, ten generations earlier.

this respect, the *komusô* societies may resemble the Fuke sect. The transmission of the bulk of the tradition was accomplished not by the institutions, but by individual *shakuhachi* players teaching other individuals. This becomes particularly evident after the Meiji period, when greater documentation allows transmission lineages of particular *honkyoku* to be partially traced over a number of generations of performers.

3.8 Transmission of *Honkyoku* from the Meiji Era to the Present

The most visible mode of transmission of the *shakuhachi* tradition from the end of the 19th century until the present has been the various institutions and groups that proliferated once the monopoly of the Fuke sect was broken. A number of terms have been used to denote these institutions, such as *ryû* (流, 'school'), *ha* (派, 'faction'), *kai* (会, 'organization') and *sha* (社, 'company'). Most of these are associated with a particular Fuke temple and with a particular person or founder who operated from that temple.

In the whole of the *honkyoku* tradition, there has been no single performer of the stature and lasting influence of Kinko I, though, as explained above, this may partly be the result of historical circumstances such as the *fukiawase* system in Edo. Consequently no single lineage exists that is the equivalent of Kinko *ryû*. Instead, numerous *ryû* or *ha* were founded, some lasting only a single generation and others still in existence today. Among the more lasting lineages that developed outside of Edo was one founded by Higuchi Taizan (樋口対山, 1856-1914). Taizan is frequently given credit for playing an instrumental role in revitalizing the *suizen* tradition in Kyôto and increasing the influence of the Myôan *kyokai* (Kamisan-gô 1974:20; Tomimori 1979:35-36). He developed the lineage of *shakuhachi* playing known as Myôan *ryu* Taizan *ha* (明暗流対山派) and was posthumously given the title of the 35th patriarch of the priestly lineage of Myôan-ji, which had been temporarily suspended at the time. Kamisan-gô lists Higuchi's successors as follows: Kobayashi Shizan (小林紫山) (36th), Tanikita Muchiku (谷北無竹) (37th), Koizumi Shizan (小泉止山) (38th) and Fukumoto Kyoan (福本虚庵) (39th). The 40th and present abbot of Myôan-ji is Yoshimura Fuan-sôshin (芳村普庵・宗心).

A major difference between Taizan *ha* and Kinko *ryû*, as well as nearly all other major *shakuhachi* organizations existing today is the complete abstention of Taizan *ha* from transmitting any pieces other than *koten honkyoku*. In contrast, particularly immediately after the abolition of the Fuke sect, Kinko *ryû* emphasized the playing of secular ensemble pieces, though it has maintained the tradition of its thirty-six *honkyoku*. As mentioned above (p.2), Tozan *ryû*, founded in the decade after the dissolution of the Fuke sect and now the largest *shakuhachi* lineage in Japan, totally abandoned the *koten honkyoku* tradition in favour of secular ensemble and newly composed solo *shakuhachi* pieces.

Kinko *ryû* and Taizan *ha* were not the only new institutions created that transmitted *koten honkyoku*. In Kyôto immediately after the dissolution of the Fuke sect, the Myôan Shinpô *ryû* (明暗真法流, 'Myôan True Dharma Sect') (alternate spelling and/or pronunciation: Shimbô, Jimpô, or Jimbô *ryû*) was important in continuing the

honkyoku tradition after the Fuke sect era. Founded by Ozaki Shinryû (尾崎真龍, 1820-1888), its leading proponent was one of Ozaki's students, Katsuura Shôzan (勝浦正山, 1856-1942). Shôzan became the head of Myôan *kyôkai* in 1881 (see above), and was influential amongst a great number of *honkyoku* players. He left Myôan *kyôkai* soon after the arrival of Taizan. Outliving almost all of his contemporaries, Katsuura came to be known as the last of the *komusô*. Although there is no longer an organization called Myôan Shinpô *ryû*, much of Katsuura's repertoire continues to be transmitted today both by individuals and as part of the repertoire of other organizations (Kamisangô 1974:20).

Chikuho *ryû*, a small school in the Kansai area founded in 1916 by Sakai Chikuho I (初代酒井竹保, 1892-1985) is one organization in which *shakuhachi* players continue to transmit Katsuura's repertoire. Chikuho I learned as many as sixty *honkyoku* from the Myôan Shinpô *ryû*, first of all from a student of Katsuura, Minamoto Unkai (源雲界), and later directly from Katsuura himself. Sakai's two sons, Chikuho II (二代目酒井竹保, 1933-1992), and Shôdô (酒井松道, b.1940) added to the Chikuho *ryû* repertoire *koten honkyoku* other than that of the old Myôan Shinpô *ryû*. Today the repertoire of the Chikuho *ryû* lists as many as seventy pieces of *koten honkyoku*, more than any other *ryû* (see Lee 1986:289-290 for a complete list of *honkyoku* in the Chikuho repertoire).

Many *honkyoku* that Chikuho II and Shôdô added to their repertoire were transmitted to them by Jin Nyodô (神如道, 1891-1966) through his student Moriyasu Nyôto (森安如蕩, b.1899). Jin was said to have learned *honkyoku* from as many as five lineages: Kinko, Shinpô, Taizan, Seien (西園流, see below) and Kimpû (錦風流, see below), as well as from over twenty individuals (Kamisangô and Tukitani 1980:52). Jin did not found a *ryû*, but his line of transmission remains strong through the many individuals who learned *honkyoku* directly from him or from his students.

Seien *ryû* represents the lineage of the former Fuke temple, Fudaiji (普大寺), which was located in Hamamatsu and founded by Kanemoto Seien 兼友西園, 1819-1895). Kimpû *ryû* (錦風流) was originally located in Hirosaki in northern Honshû. It was officially founded by Nyûi Getsuei (乳井月影, 1833-1898) in 1883, but traces its lineage back to Kurihara Kimpû (栗原錦風), a *komusô* active in Edo during the early 1800s. Though there are very few active members of either of these *ryû*, their repertoire continues to be transmitted through other lineages and individuals.

Nine lineages related to the Myôan lineage are listed by Tukitani (1990a:5), quoting from an abridged genealogy of *shakuhachi* adherents in the Myôan lineage as of February 1936", found in the *Shakuhachi shiryô Kyoreizan Myôanji bunken zen* (尺八史料虚霊山明暗寺文献 全, 'Materials on the Shakuhachi; All of the Documents of the Temple Kyoreizan Myôanji', 1937, ed. Tsukamoto Kyodô 塚本虚童). The nine lineages (called *ha* here) of *shakuhachi* players of are as follows:

1. Myôan Shinryô *ha* (明暗真龍派), also known as the Kansai Shinryô *ha* (関西真龍派) founded by Matano Shinryô (俣野真龍, 1791-1861)

2. Myôan Sôetsu *ha* (明暗宗悦派), also known as the Kansai Sôetsu *ha* (関西宗悦派) founded by Kondô Sôetsu (近藤宗悦, 1821?-1867)
3. Myôan Shinpô *ha* (明暗真法派) founded by Ozaki Shinryô (尾崎真龍, 1820-1888), teacher of Katsuura Shôzan
4. Kyûshû Myôan *ha* (九州明暗派) founded by Shimizu Jyôzan (or Seizan) (清水静山, 1872-1913)
5. Myôan Rogetsu *ha* (明暗露月派) founded by Tsunoda Rogetsu (津野田露月, 1872?-1958)
6. Myôan Taizan *ha* (明暗対山派) founded by Higuchi Taizan (樋口対山, 1856-1914)
7. Fuke Shakuhachi *ha* (普化尺八派) founded by Miyakawa Nyozan (宮川如山, 1868-1946)
8. Fuke Myôan *ha* (普化明暗派) founded by Uramoto Setchô (浦本浙潮, 1891-1965)
9. Itchôken Fukkô *ha* (一朝軒復興派, revived Itchôken *ha*), also known as the Myôan Manshō *ha* (明暗萬松派) founded by Tanaka Yûhi (田中雄飛, 1911-), later known as Watazumi/Wadatsumi Fumon (海童普門), or Watazumidôso (海童道祖)

Of the nine *ha* listed above, only the Taizan *ha* still functions today as an organizational unit with a significant membership. Although the other eight organizations themselves have virtually ceased to exist, the *honkyoku* that they transmitted continue to be played. For example, *honkyoku* of Watazumi are among the most widely performed and appreciated today, due in part to a number of recordings made by Watazumi, but primarily because of the wide exposure given the pieces by one of Watazumi's students, Yokoyama Katsuya. The large number of *ha* listed above is indicative of the complexity of the transmission lines of *koten honkyoku* after the abolition of the Fuke sect. It should be noted that the above *ha* were in no way exclusive, in the way that Tozan *ryû*, or to a lesser degree the sub-lineages of Kinko *ryû* are.

As stated above, founded by Kurosawa Kinko—essentially a professional musician in Edo (now Tokyo) in the 18th century—the Kinko lineage was in an excellent position to thrive in a post-Fuke-sect era of secular music largely due to its origin within the *fukiawase* system.

Because of the complete dissolution of Ichigetsuji and Reihôji, the two temples from which Kinko I operated, the association between them and the Kinko *ryû* today is not stressed.

The disciples of the Kinko lineage transmit a basically set repertoire of pieces, a particular performance style and techniques, which are believed to have been crystallized by Kinko I and his immediate successors. Sub-lineages within the main Kinko lineage have occurred from as early as the generation after Kinko I. There are at present five or six sub-lineages of the Kinko *ryû*, called *sha* or *kai*, for example, Chikumeisha (竹盟社). All Kinko sub-lineages are completely separate administratively and compete in varying degrees for new members and prestige.

The *honkyoku* repertoire performed and transmitted by Kinko players are fixed in number (thirty-six), and, to a large degree, in performance practices as well (Tukitani et al. 1991:34). Most of the sub-lineages publish some if not all of the Kinko *honkyoku* repertoire. Although each Kinko sub-lineage uses slightly different scores and performance techniques for *honkyoku* (see Gutzwiller 1984:199-217), the distinctive Kinko style can be heard in the playing of all Kinko players.

The degree of standardization which occurs in the number of *honkyoku* in the Kinko repertoire, the scores for the pieces, the performance practices of those pieces, and the early occurrence of this standardization in time is exceptional in the *suizen* tradition as a whole. This atypical degree of standardization may be the result of a bureaucratic approach to transmission in contrast to a more musical or spiritual one.

Among the sub-lineages of the Kinko *ryû* today are those headed by Araki Kodô V (五代目荒木古童, b.1940), Nôtomi Judô II (納富寿童, b.1929), Aoki Reibo II (二代目青木鈴慕, b.1935), Yamaguchi Gorô (山口五郎, b.1933) and Kawase Junsuke III (三代目川瀬順輔, b.1936). See Gutzwiller (1984:24-25) for a lineage chart of the Kinko *ryû*.

During the Edo period, *komusô* of the Fuke sect traded *honkyoku* among themselves while on pilgrimages, either teaching or being taught. In this way the collective repertoire of *honkyoku* within the Fuke sect was continually being diffused throughout Japan, with a noticeable degree of variation and change occurring in the process. Even the members of the Kinko lineage exchanged pieces with “non-Kinko members”, as evidenced by the Araki score of the piece *Shika no tône* (see p.32) that was given to a *komusô* visiting from the country. The sharing and comparing of *honkyoku* was deeply ingrained in the *komusô* tradition. The exclusivity of the *iemoto* system, e.g., that of Tozan *ryû*, though advantageous in building economically and politically powerful organizations, is diametrically opposed to the spirit of *suizen* and of *koten honkyoku*.

Tukitani (1990a:5-6) gives the example of Miyakawa Nyozan as illustrative of the lack of constraint of many *shakuhachi* players in learning *honkyoku* of other schools or lineages. Nyozan studied *honkyoku* from Higuchi Taizan of the Myôan Taizan *ha*, from Katsuura Shôzan of the Myôan Shinpô *ryû* and from Hasegawa Tôgaku (長谷川東学, 1847?-1909), a *komusô* of the Ôshû lineage as transmitted at the temple Futaiken (布袋軒) in northern Japan. Tôgaku also mastered the repertoire and performance practices of his native Kyûshû (he was born in Kumamoto). Tukitani (1986:288-301) states that Nyozan created the *honkyoku* “*Ajikan*” by combining elements of all of the above lineages.

Takahashi Kûzan (高橋空山, 1900-1986) is another example of the eclectic nature of *honkyoku* transmission. Kûzan is said to have studied with Miyakawa Nyozan and Katsuura Shôzan as well as with Takase Sukeji (高瀬助治), Kobayashi Haou (小林波鷗), Komichi Toyotarô (小路豊太郎), Kobayashi Shizan (小林紫山) and Okazaki Meidô (岡崎明道). He also played pieces from Kimpû *ryû*, and is said to have learned over one hundred and fifty *honkyoku*. Uramoto Setchô and Jin Nyodô also had numerous teachers. Yamaue Getsuzan (山上月山, b. 1908) also devoted his life to learning *honkyoku* from as many sources as possible, notating *honkyoku* that he

learned and documenting the complex lineages of individual pieces. The material he gathered and arranged is one of the most important sources of data on the transmission of *honkyoku* during the twentieth century. For example, Yamaue alone learned four versions of “*Reibo*” of the Ôshû district, the central piece of this thesis.

Finally, mention must be made of Watazumi Fumon. Originally from Kyûshû, his *shakuhachi* training began in the Itchôken tradition. As was typically the case, he travelled throughout Japan, learning and teaching *honkyoku* and eventually developing a repertoire of at least forty pieces (Yokoyama OC1989). He does not call his instruments *shakuhachi*, instead using the term *hôchiku* (法竹, ‘dharma bamboo’). He also avoids the word *honkyoku* to indicate pieces that he performs, using instead the term *dôkyoku* (道曲, ‘pieces of the Way’, a reference to one of his aliases, Watazumi dôso 海童道祖, literally ‘Founder of the Way of the Ocean-Child’). The beauty and intensity of their form and performing style, as well as the high calibre of technique required to play them have made *dôkyoku* one of the most performed repertoire of *honkyoku* today.

Watazumi became well-known in the 1960s and 1970s largely due to the efforts of his student, Yokoyama Katsuya, who assisted in the release of a number of Watazumi recordings. Watazumi soon gained notoriety for his eccentric actions, which were usually aimed at destroying set patterns of behaviour and thought. As only one of numerous examples, he was once invited to participate in a tea ceremony, an extremely formalized event in any circumstance. In this instance the ceremony was performed by an elite group of ladies representing Japan’s highest society. During the course of the ceremony, in which utensils worth many thousands of dollars were used, Watazumi proceeded to urinate in his tea bowl. The other participants at the ceremony were left speechless (Yokoyama OC1989).

Watazumi’s eccentricity is matched by equally outstanding performance techniques, one example being a standard of pitch control rare among *shakuhachi* players who perform only *honkyoku*. During his lifetime, Watazumi gained almost legendary stature in the *shakuhachi* world, with a number of myth-like stories about him circulating widely. One such story relates how Watazumi blew into a *shakuhachi* with such force and concentration that the bamboo actually split in his hands. Watazumi, and his student Yokoyama, even more so, have given *honkyoku* in general, and the repertoire other than the thirty-six Kinko *honkyoku* in particular, an unprecedented amount of favourable exposure.

Tukitani (1990a:6) estimates the total number of extant *honkyoku*, including variations, as approximately one-hundred and eighty pieces. This number is reached by adding together the repertoire of the main *honkyoku* lineages. These lineages and the number of pieces they have transmitted are as follows: thirty-six of Kinko *ryû*, ten of Kimpû *ryû*, eleven of Seien *ryû*, about sixty of Myôan Shinpô *ryû*, thirty-three of Myôan Taizan *ha*, about ten of the Kyûshû lineages such as that of the temple Itchôken in Hakata and between ten and twenty transmitted by the Ôshû lineages such as those of the temples Futaiken and Shôganken.

As stated above, the *shakuhachi* tradition in Japan today is dominated by Kinko *ryû*, and by Tozan *ryû*. In terms of numbers of members alone, these two lineages account for the overwhelming majority of contemporary *shakuhachi* players. The remainder of

the *shakuhachi* tradition consists of a small minority of players, many of whom belong to less prominent organizations such as Chikuho *ryû* or Taizan *ryû*, and some of whom are individuals belonging to no organization.⁴⁸ In terms of the *honkyoku* repertoire, however, the Kinko *ryû*, with thirty-six pieces, and the Tozan *ryû*, with none at all, clearly represent the minority. This is true not only in terms of actual numbers of pieces, but even more so in terms of multifarious transmission processes without which the *honkyoku* could not have been handed down.

Most of the literature on *honkyoku*, especially that in languages other than Japanese, presents an image of a tidy transmission process, in which sub-lineages and minor *ryû* may be created and eventually die out, but which is dominated by the stability of the Kinko lineage, whose *honkyoku* repertoire remains constant in number of pieces, titles and musical content. This picture may well serve forces within the *shakuhachi* tradition driven by a power-seeking bureaucratic approach, but it does not reflect the intricate reality of the majority of *honkyoku* transmission.

A more realistic image of the transmission of *koten honkyoku* is one of diversity, change and variation, of a level of complexity approaching nature itself. As will be shown, most *honkyoku* undergo variation and/or change in almost all aspects, including their titles, form and performance practices, during the process of transmission. In the face of such complexity, the principle research question of this thesis can be delineated as follows: until what point is a piece still the same piece as the level of difference in name and/or form increases with the process of transmission? A more fundamental question is: what is being transmitted in the *koten honkyoku* tradition? The remaining chapters of this thesis attempt to address these and related questions. It is hoped that the resultant picture of the *honkyoku* tradition approximates reality at least to the degree that enables the reader to begin to appreciate the beauty and complexity of *shakuhachi honkyoku*.

In conclusion, the history of *shakuhachi honkyoku* shows that their transmission has occurred not through institutions or organizations, but always from one individual to another individual. Though those involved in transmission are frequently classified under a particular *ryû* or *ha*, such as Kinko *ryû*, the individuals who comprise the organisation are, nonetheless, the sole conduit of transmission. In almost every case, *shakuhachi* organizations are attempts to perpetuate the repertoire and performance style of the founder and immediate successors, and are specifically administered to increase their political and economic influence. This is true not only of *shakuhachi* organizations existing today but can also be said of the Fuke sect, which for two hundred years monopolized *shakuhachi* for its own purposes.

Although the Fuke sect existed for two centuries, it did not survive the changes of the Meiji period, and was largely replaced by a number of *shakuhachi* organizations. The organizational structures within the *shakuhachi* tradition since the demise of the Fuke sect have tended to flourish for only one, two or at most three generations, after which

⁴⁸ This thesis has deliberately ignored the *min'yô shakuhachi* tradition, which is vibrant and multifaceted. The omission is due to the limited subject matter of this thesis and is not meant to assign an inferior status to *min'yô* players.

they usually diverge into either one or more competing institutions or disappear entirely, their repertoire sometimes kept alive only by individuals not affiliated with any organization. *Shakuhachi honkyoku* transcend the political and economic concerns of the Fuke sect and of these latter day organizations, both as music and as the spiritual practice of *suizen*. Because of this, *shakuhachi honkyoku* have survived and will always survive the eventual and inevitable demise of these organizations.

CHAPTER 4

TRANSMITTING ‘THE BELL’; A CASE STUDY OF THE PIECE “*REIBO*”

4.1 The Word “*Reibo*” and Related Terms

The word “*Reibo*” consists of the two *kanji* (Chinese characters), *rei* (鈴) and *bo* (慕). *Rei* in general denotes a bell, but can also have the specific meaning of a handbell. Illustrating the confusion students of the Japanese written language constantly face, a second reading for this character is *taku*, which is also the reading of a different character: 鐸. This second character (鐸) has only one meaning, that of a large handbell, and is, in a sense, both a homonym and a synonym to *rei/taku* (鈴). It is the second character *taku* that is used in the title of the legendary history of the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition, the previously mentioned *Kyotaku denki* (虚鐸伝記), as well as the title to what is claimed to be the first *honkyoku* ever conceived and performed, “*Kyotaku*” (虚鐸, ‘Empty Bell’).

The meanings given for the character *bo* are ‘yearn for, love dearly, adore, follow’, with *bo* also used in combination with other characters to form words meaning ‘yearning, desire, long for, longing, affection, hold dear’ (Nelson 1962:787).

The character *rei* is said to allude to the eccentric 9th century Chinese Zen priest, Fuke Zenji (Chinese: Puhua) (see p.106), who was known for his flourishing a handbell during religious pilgrimages. “*Reibo*” therefore has an aura of centuries of tradition to the *shakuhachi* player and suggests the yearning for or a following of the spirit of Fuke, as symbolized by his bell (Takahashi 1971:68). According to Takahashi, during the Edo period each of the various *komusô* temples in existence at that time had its own piece that was transmitted by *komusô* attached to the temple, and from which the term *ichiji ichiritsu* (一寺一律, one temple, one melody) originated (quoted by Tukitani 1990:48). This piece was called either “*Reibo*” (鈴慕) or “*Reihô*” (鈴法).

The term “*Reihô*” is used in a manner making it almost synonymous with “*Reibo*”. For example, Tukitani (1990b:49) classifies the piece “*Tehodoki Reihô*” (手解鈴法, ‘Introductory Reihô’) as a “*Reibo*” piece. Among the meanings of the character *hō* are law, or doctrine. It is the character used to denote the word *dharma*, which, in both Hinduism and Buddhism means ‘the cosmic order or law, including the natural and moral principles that apply to all beings and things; and the dutiful observance of this law in one’s life; right conduct’ (Guralnik 1978:388). “*Reihô*” may therefore be translated as ‘the Dharma of the Bell’.

There are a number of other variants of the title “*Reibo*” in addition to “*Reihô*”. These are “*Renbo*” (恋慕), “*Reibo*” (靈慕), using a different character for *rei* (靈) and “*Rinmon*” (臨門). Among the meanings of the character *ren* (恋) are ‘love’, or ‘yearn for’. The character *rei* (靈) means ‘soul, spirit’ and is used together with other ideographs to form such words as ‘sacred mountain’ (*reizan* 靈山), and ‘divine nature, spirituality’ (*reisei* 靈性) (Nelson 1962:945). The character *rin* (臨) means

‘face; be confronted by; be on the verge of; deal with; come upon, come up to’ (Nelson 1962:754), while the character *mon* (門) can mean ‘gate, gateway; and door’ (Nelson 1962:920). This last character is important in Zen literature, alluding to such concepts as a “gate” to one’s mind, or to enlightenment.

The variant titles of “*Reihô*” (鈴法) and “*Reibo*” (鈴慕) can therefore be translated in the following ways: “*Renbo*” can be translated as ‘Intense Yearning or Longing’. “*Reibo*” (靈慕) can mean ‘Spiritual Yearning’, and “*Rinmon*” can mean ‘Facing the Gateway’ or ‘Confronting the Gate’.

Tukitani (1990b:50) implies that the term “*Reihô*” is generally thought to predate the term “*Reibo*”, stating that it is commonly believed that the former was changed to the latter, and in some cases changing to “*Renbo*” (恋慕), “*Reibo*” (靈慕) or “*Rinmon*” (臨門). This belief is indirectly supported by the fact that one of the main temples of the Fuke sect during the Edo period was Reihôji (鈴法寺) (see p.[114](#)).

In contrast to Tukitani, Nakatsuka (1979:131) suggests that “*Renbo*” rather than “*Reihô*” predates the other variant terms because “*Renbo*” is found in the book *Shichiku shoshin shû* (Nakamura 1664) as part of the titles to the pieces “*Renbo nagashi*” and “*Kyô renbo*”. Nakatsuka’s reasoning is based on the assumption that the pieces in the book *Shichiku shoshin shû* predate all of the “*Reibo*” pieces (see Chapter 2.)

Implicit in all of the titles “*Reibo*”, “*Reihô*”, “*Renbo*” and “*Rinmon*” is a strong association with Buddhism. In the case of “*Reibo*” (鈴慕) and “*Reihô*” (鈴法), there is also the association with the Zen Buddhist priest Puhua (J. Fuke), who was noted for his constant ringing of a handbell (a *rei* or *taku*, 鈴). This association dates at least from the late 18th century, the time of the writing of *Kyotaku denki kokujikai*. That the association was originally based upon fiction rather than fact did not weaken it in the minds of those members of the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition who believed in the association. Even now, when the work of Nakatsuka and others has conclusively shown that the Fuke legend is not factually grounded and very few if any take the *Kyotaku denki kokujikai* at face value, the centuries old association between the *honkyoku* and Fuke still operates within the tradition and is manifested in the names “*Reibo*” and “*Reihô*”.

In the case of “*Reibo*”, “*Reihô*” and “*Renbo*”, the meaning of ‘yearning’ or ‘longing’ also has considerable significance in the framework of Zen Buddhist philosophy. One of the primary teachings of Buddhism is that suffering, a universal ill, is caused by desires, or in other words, yearning. The cessation of desire or yearning is the way to end the eternal cycle of suffering. Recognition of the central role one’s desires play in suffering is a first step toward enlightenment.

There is another, more positive aspect to the concept of “yearning”, however, than its equation with “desires” or that which causes suffering. This positive sense of “yearning” is, in fact, addressed in almost all of the world’s religions and philosophies. In an interview on ABC Radio National, Jean Houston read the following quote from her book entitled *The Search for the Beloved*:

In all the great spiritual and mystery traditions, the central theme, the guiding passion, is the deep yearning for union with the Beloved of the soul. This lies at the heart of sacred psychology, transcending the desire for romantic love, the nourishment of parental love, and all the other varieties of human loving. It is a calling to the source.

The passion of St. John of the Cross for the Divine Lover is one of the most ecstatic and exquisite statements of the mystery of divine human loving. It recalls the yearning of Isis for Osiris, the love songs of Orpheus, the spiritual and fleshly eros of the Psalm of Songs. It is central to Sufi mysticism. And the Hasid is never the more himself than when caught up in the ecstatic dance of love with God.

Nor is it limited to the major world religions. One of the most moving accounts of this longing is found in Laurens van der Post's account of the Dance of the Great Hunger of the Bushmen of the Kalihari. He writes, "It is the dance of the hunger that neither the food of the earth nor the way of life possible upon it can satisfy. Whenever I ask them about it, they would say, 'Not only we feel this hunger, but the stars too sitting up there with their hearts of plenty, they too feel it, and feeling it, tremble as if afraid they would wane and their light die on account of so great a hunger'".

In Greek, it may be expressed as pathos. Plato defined it as "a yearning desire for a distant object." And Dylan Thomas had it as, "the force that through the green fuse drives the flower, drives my blood". It is the divine force behind all of our ceaseless wandering, behind the apparent foolishness that sends us in pursuit of the improbable. Sacred psychology asks, who or what is it that is yearning for you, calling to you? Who is the beloved you are always trying to remember?

Houston 1990

This yearning, which can be immense, is a yearning "to be met at our depths". There is still great suffering in this yearning. Buddha, whose suffering was monumental, takes his name from the word *bodhi*, which means 'to awaken'. The bell of Fuke is the sound of awakening. "*Reibo*", 'Yearning for the Bell' is thus a yearning to awaken, to know oneself as a Buddha.

Another variation of the title of this piece also contains similar wisdom. The word "*Rinmon*", when translated as 'Facing the Gateway', 'On the Verge of the Gate', etc. is also pregnant with meaning in a Zen Buddhist context. Examples of the use of the image of the gate abound in Zen literature. For example, one of the influential Chinese masterpieces of Chan (J. Zen) Buddhist literature is entitled *Wu-men kuan* (無門觀, 1228; J. *Mumonkan*). Translated as 'Gateless Gate' or 'Gateless Barrier', *Mumonkan* has been called "the most basic koan collection in the literature of Zen" (Maezumi, in Yamada 1979:viii). The three characters (*mu*, 'nothing'; *mon*, 'gate'; *kan*, 'barrier') suggest a barrier without a gate or passage through which to pass. In the preface to one of a number of English translations of *Mumonkan* (Enomiya-Lassalle, in Yamada 1979:xiv), we are told that each koan of the 48 cases compiled in the book is a barrier. The koans or barriers cannot be entered into with ordinary

thinking or logic because they have no gate. But for one whose “Eye is opened to [the] True Self”, entering is easy because there is no gate at all.

The latter case fits an alternative meaning to the title *Mumonkan*. Sekada (1977:27) explains that the third ideograph *kan* may also mean checkpoints at internal boundaries where travellers had their documents examined. *Mumonkan* could therefore also mean ‘a checkpoint that is not blocked in any way’, or ‘open checkpoint’. An example of using the image of “Rinmon”, or ‘facing the gate’ can be found in one of the koans in *Mumonkan*. In case 47, a Zen master presents three “barriers” or questions that his Zen students must face or meet. According to Yamada (1979:237) these “barriers” are really the single barrier of *kensho* (見性) or ‘self-realization’.

In these and other examples, the depth of meaning and the association with Zen Buddhism can be seen in the title “*Reibo*” and the variants “*Reihô*”, “*Renbo*” and “*Rinmon*”.

4.2 Classification of “*Reibo*” Titles

Numerous *shakuhachi honkyoku* incorporate the words “*Reibo*”, “*Reihô*”, “*Renbo*” and “*Rinmon*” in their title. Tukitani (1990b:11) gives as representative examples fifteen pieces. They are: “*Kyûshû reibo*” (九州鈴慕); “*Kyo reibo*” (京鈴慕); “*Murasaki reibo*” (紫鈴慕), also called “*Murasakino reibo*” (紫野鈴慕); “*Izu reibo*” (伊豆鈴慕); “*Igusa reibo*” (葦草鈴慕); “*Echigo reibo*” (越後鈴慕), also known as “*Kitaguni reibo*” (北国鈴慕); “*Ôshû reibo*” (奥州鈴慕), also known as “*Reibo*” (鈴慕); “*Miyagi reibo*” (宮城鈴慕); “*Mutsu reibo*” (陸奥鈴慕); “*Namiwa reibo*” (波間鈴慕); “*Tehodoki reibo*” (手解鈴慕); “*Shiseki reibo*” (真跡鈴慕); “*Mukaiji reibo*” (霧海簾鈴慕); “*Kokû reibo*” (虚空鈴慕); and “*Sôkaku reibo*” (巢鶴鈴慕).

Takahashi (1979:269-306) lists nineteen titles of pieces incorporating the above words. They are: “*Reihô*” (鈴法); “*Rinmon*” (臨門); “*Renbo*” (恋慕); “*Nagashi reihô*” (流鈴法); “*Reihô nagashi*” (鈴法流); “*Izu reihô*” (伊豆鈴法); “*Namima reihô*” (波間鈴法); “*Ôshû reihô*” (奥州鈴法); “*Kitaguni reihô*” (北国鈴法); “*Tehodoki reihô*” (手解鈴法); “*Godan reihô*” (五段鈴法); “*Shinseki reihô*” (真跡鈴法); “*Yoshiya reihô*” (ヨシヤ鈴法); “*Murasakino reihô*” (紫野鈴法); “*Igusa reihô*” (井草鈴法); “*Iyo reihô*” (伊予鈴法); “*Kakusui reihô*” (覚睡鈴法); “*Izumo reihô*” (出雲鈴法); and “*Kyûshû reihô*” (九州鈴法).

The Chikuho *ryû* repertoire contains eleven such pieces. They are: “*Tehodoki reibo*”; “*Kyûshû reibo*”; “*Sukaku reibo*” (巢鶴鈴慕); “*Renbo nagashi*” (恋慕流し); “*Igusa reibo*”; “*Asuka reibo*” (飛鳥鈴慕); “*Murasakino reibo*”; “*Mutsu reibo*”; “*Shôganken reibo*” (松巖軒鈴慕); “*Futaiken reibo*” (布袋軒鈴慕); and “*Nagashi reibo*” (流し鈴慕) (Chikuho *ryû*: 1971). Other titles include “*Reibo*”, using a

different character (霊慕); “*Yamato reibo*” (倭鈴慕); and “*Miyagino reibo*” (宮城野鈴慕).

According to Tukitani (1990b:10-12), all the “*Reibo*” pieces can be classified into three categories. These categories are: 1) locationally designated titles; 2) titles with descriptive words preceding the word “*Reibo*” or “*Reihô*”; and 3) titles in which the word “*Reibo*” is used as a suffix to the name of pieces that have little relationship to other “*Reibo*” pieces. To Tukitani’s three classifications should be added a fourth category: 4) pieces known only by the title “*Reibo*” or “*Reihô*”.

Locationally designated titles include “*Kyûshû reibo*”, “*Kyô reibo*”, “*Murasaki reibo*”, “*Murasakino reibo*”, “*Izu reibo*”, “*Igusa reibo*”, “*Echigo reibo*”, “*Kitaguni reibo*”, “*Ôshû reibo*”, “*Miyagi reibo*”, “*Mutsu reibo*”, “*Asuka reibo*” and “*Izumo reibo*”. In these titles, the word preceding *reibo* is a place name, such as *Kyûshû* in the south and *Ôshû* in the north. Titles designated by temple names instead of geographical localities, such as “*Shôganken reibo*” and “*Futaiken reibo*”, could also be included in this classification.

Titles with descriptive words preceding the term “*Reibo*” or “*Reihô*” are “*Namima reibo*” or “*Namima reihô*”, which means ‘On the Wave *Reibo*’ and “*Tehodoki reibo* (or *reihô*)”, meaning ‘Beginners’ or ‘Introductory *Reibo/Reihô*’. Examples of the third category are “*Kokû reibo*”, “*Mukaiji reibo*” and “*Sôkaku reibo*”.

As examples of the fourth category, Takahashi lists four separate “*Reihô*” pieces that were transmitted at three different temples, Ichigetsuji (一月寺), Myôanji (明暗寺) of the Echigo district and Myôanji of the Kyôtô area, and one piece that was transmitted within the Nesasa school (根笹派), located in the Aomori district. There are numerous titles with “*Reibo*” preceded by ‘As transmitted by [name of person or temple]’, such as “*Kannariji den ‘Reibo’*” (金成寺伝[鈴慕]); “*Garyôken den ‘Reibo’*” (臥竜軒伝[鈴慕]), “*Uramoto Setchô den ‘Reibo’*” (浦本浙潮伝[鈴慕]), etc.

To add to these confusing lists of titles by categories of “*Reibo*” or “*Reihô*” pieces are other pieces that can be shown to be identical to, or variants of, a “*Reibo*” piece. For example, all pieces in category three are also known by the same titles but with the suffix “*Reibo*” omitted. Some examples are “*Mukaiji*” that is a variant of “*Mukaiji reibo*”, a “*Kokû*” variant of “*Kokû reibo*” and a “*Sôkaku*” variant of “*Sôkaku reibo*”. These variants have been transmitted by lineages different from those through which pieces with the suffix “*Reibo*” in their title have been transmitted. Finally, as will be shown below (p.183), there is a piece entitled “*Furin*” (風林) which is a variant of a number of the “*Reibo*” pieces mentioned above.

It must be stressed that all of the above is a classification of titles, not of pieces. Tukitani (1990b:10) points out that throughout the *honkyoku* repertoire, many titles are used for pieces that are virtually identical with each other even though they are called by different names, that is “different names - same composition”. Also there are many pieces with the same name, but with different titles, or “same name - different compositions”. Finally, there are pieces with identical names but with structural variation, or “variants”. Examples of all three types of combinations can be

found in the “*Reibo*” titles listed above. In order to classify the pieces themselves, one must go beyond the titles and look at the music, using written scores, spoken or written sources dealing with the music, and finally, transcriptions of performances. This type of examination will be undertaken later in this thesis.

4.3 The *Ôshû* Family of the “*Reibo*” Piece

The preceding section has described the meaning and symbolism of the word “*Reibo*” and other related terms, and listed and categorized the many pieces in the *honkyoku* tradition for which these terms are used as titles. For this thesis, only one piece, or “family of pieces” of the many different “*Reibo*” pieces has been chosen for close scrutiny and analysis. This is the family of “*Reibo*” pieces of the *Ôshû* district of northern Japan.

The description of the group of pieces will follow, in general, the path which the author travelled in his own research, beginning with a single piece which was taught to him by his *shakuhachi* teacher, Chikuho II, nearly twenty years ago. The following description of the process of choosing, and of subsequent study of this family of pieces as the central topic of research in this thesis may help illuminate both the reasons for such a choice and the nature of *honkyoku*.

Once I had decided that the general subject of my thesis was to be the *koten honkyoku*, the classical Zen-related repertoire of *shakuhachi* pieces, I narrowed down that unworkably broad subject by choosing a single piece on which to focus. After much deliberation, the piece “*Shôganken reibo*” (‘*Reibo* of the *Shôgan* temple’) was chosen for two reasons. First of all, it was a favourite piece of mine, which I had long ago memorized, and which I had performed on numerous occasions. I thus felt that I knew “*Shôganken reibo*” on both conscious and intuitive levels. Secondly, the use of the word *reibo* in the title, with its many meanings and legendary associations, suggested a subject worthy of in-depth investigation.

At the time, I assumed the piece to be a single composition with a single, easily traced lineage. Sakai Chikuho II first taught me “*Shôganken reibo*” in Osaka in 1973. As a rule, Chikuho II, the *iemoto* of Chikuho *ryû*, rarely offered to explain to me who had taught him a particular piece, and I rarely asked. In the case of “*Shôganken reibo*”, either Chikuho II made an exception, or the lineage of transmission was described to me later, possibly by Sakai Shôdô (酒井松道, b. 1940), Chikuho II’s younger brother and *iemoto* of Chikuho *ryû* since 1985. In any case, I was told that unlike many of the *koten honkyoku* in the Chikuho *ryû* repertoire, Chikuho II had not learned the piece from his father, Sakai Chikuho I, known as Chikuô (竹翁) after his retirement in 1967 as the founding head of Chikuho *ryû*. Instead Chikuho II had received the piece from another *shakuhachi* player in the *Ôsaka* district, Moriyasu Nyotô (森安如涛, b.1899).

Nyotô was a long-time student of Jin Nyodô (神如道, 1891-1966), a prominent *shakuhachi* player based in Kyôto, famous throughout Japan as a teacher and performer of *koten honkyoku*. Jin, being a *shakuhachi* performer of much greater stature than Moriyasu and still active at least three decades after Chikuho II’s birth,

would at first glance be a more logical choice than Moriyasu for transmitting of any *honkyoku*, including “*Shôganken reibo*” to Chikuho II. Under the circumstances, more seems to have been taken into consideration than the proficiency and fame of the teacher. Chikuho II, as the future *iemoto* of Chikuho *ryu*, could not simply go to established *shakuhachi* teachers of other lineages to learn new *honkyoku*. Doing so would be contrary to the rank and status of *iemoto*, and might result in a loss of esteem for both Chikuho II personally and for the *ryû* (Lee 1986:90). In this case, Moriyasu was a less problematic choice of teacher than the famous Jin.

Prior to selecting “*Shôganken reibo*” as the topic of this thesis, it was known that this particular piece had been received from Jin through Moriyasu, and that Chikuho II was transmitting it to his students as part of the Chikuho *ryû* repertoire. Chikuho II did tell me that in the Edo period there had been a *komusô* temple, now defunct, called Shôganken (松岩軒, *shô*, ‘pine tree’; *gan*, ‘boulder’; *ken*, ‘sub-temple’), located in Hanamaki (花巻), a town in what is now the northern Japanese prefecture of Iwate (岩手県), near the city of Sendai (仙台), and that “*Shôganken reibo*” came from that temple just as other “*Reibo*” pieces had come from other temples and locations in Japan.

With this information and the more substantial conscious and intuitive knowledge gained by having performed “*Shôganken reibo*” from memory countless times over fifteen years, I again returned to Japan in 1988 to begin research into the history of its transmission.

By the time my year of research in Japan was completed, I knew that “*Shôganken reibo*” as transmitted by Chikuho II was only one of many variants that could be traced back to what analysis indicated to be a single piece. As a result, “*Shôganken reibo*” could not be used as the focal point of this thesis unless that focal point also included a number of these other variants, even though they are now known by different titles and are considered distinctly separate pieces in the Chikuho repertoire and in the minds of many of the *shakuhachi* players of other schools and lineages who perform them. It also became apparent that the Jin-Moriyasu-Sakai-Lee transmission was part of only one lineage necessary to investigate. Other performing lineages from a variety of locales, which at first glance appeared unrelated, also required attention.

Three types of sources were used to determine which pieces, lineages and performers to include in the study of “*Shôganken reibo*”: 1) *shakuhachi* lineage or genealogy charts that seemed to be related to the transmission of “*Shôganken reibo*”; 2) interviews of *shakuhachi* players who perform “*Shôganken reibo*”; 3) books, articles, descriptive notes of recordings and other publications that mention “*Shôganken reibo*”. Data gained from these sources indicated the pieces, the lineages and the performers to be studied.

Genealogy or lineage charts are common in the field of *hōgaku* (邦楽, ‘Japanese music’), the *shakuhachi* tradition being no exception. Representative of the popularity of such charts is the *Nihon ongaku daijiten* (日本音楽大事典, ‘Dictionary of Japanese Music’, hereafter NOD 1989). In the appendix of this reference work are thirty-four pages of extensive lineage charts, and their explanations, of all of the major genres of *hōgaku*, including two pages on the *shakuhachi* tradition (Tukitani in

NOD 1989:46-47). These and other *shakuhachi* lineage charts typically show the names of the teachers and their students, students of the students, etc., of various organisations such as Chikuhō *ryū*, or those within Kinkō *ryū*. In many of these charts, only those persons who became *iemoto* or heads of their lineage or were in other ways important to the lineage are listed (e.g., Gutschwiller 1983:24-25). These lineage charts, therefore, do not show the lines of transmission of specific pieces, such as “*Shōganken reibo*”.

Though not piece-specific, it is sometimes possible to use lineage charts to trace the transmission of a single *honkyoku*. This is especially the case of the Ōshū lineage, Ōshū being an old name for the district in which the transmission of the lineage was traditionally centred, because of its apparent relationship with the piece “*Shōganken reibo*”. Charts of this lineage have been published by Tukitani (in NOD 1989:47) and by Yamaue (1984:167). Tukitani calls this lineage the “*Ōshū fuchi ha*” (奥州不知派), while Yamaue labels it “*Ōshū Myōan (fuchi ha)*” (奥州明暗「不知派」). Tukitani’s chart is based largely upon Yamaue’s extensive and nearly illegible published chart, other unpublished charts by Yamaue, and charts compiled by Izui (出井) and Takahashi (高橋) (in Yamaue 1984:170-175). The Izui and Takahashi charts are basically expanded and redrawn Yamaue charts.

Under close scrutiny, the Ōshū lineage, as portrayed in the charts mentioned above, seems to parallel the transmission of a single *honkyoku*. More accurately, the transmission of a single family of closely related pieces seems to be the determinant used in deciding who was to be included in the charts. The family of *honkyoku* being transmitted is the “*Ōshū kei* (系, ‘lineage’) ‘*Reibo*’”. One of the pieces in the “*Ōshū kei ‘Reibo’*” is “*Shōganken reibo*”.

Tukitani (1982:104) asserts that during this century the group of pieces encompassed by the name “*Ōshū kei ‘Reibo’*” has been transmitted from one generation of *shakuhachi* players to another via three main branches or stream and that Jin Nyodō learned “*Shōganken reibo*” via two of those three streams. Tukitani further speculates that Jin, in order to differentiate between what he considered to be two different pieces rather than two versions of the same piece, gave the title “*Shōganken reibo*” to one of the versions. Research undertaken for this thesis and presented below supports Tukitani’s hypothesis.

4.3.1 “*Shōganken reibo*” Lineage

Tukitani (1982) has proposed the theory that “*Shōganken reibo*” is only one of many names used to refer to what may be called the “*Reibo*” piece of the Ōshū lineage. She arrives at this conclusion primarily by looking at the transmission of the piece, in other words, by seeing who taught the piece to whom. My own experience both confirms and illustrates her line of reasoning.

To facilitate an understanding of the transmission of “*Shōganken reibo*”, it was necessary to chart a piece-specific lineage rather than a person-specific lineage. Progressively more complex charts are given as persons involved in the transmission

are introduced. As mentioned above, I was taught the piece by Chikuho II, who, with his brother Sakai Shôdô, was taught by Moriyasu Nyotô, who learned the piece from Jin Nyodô. This relationship, as well as the dates of the above mentioned persons, can be seen in [Chart 1](#).

Jin Nyodô learned the piece from Orito Nyogetsu (折登如月), who, according to Yamaue (1984:167) and Tukitani (in NOD 1989:47), also taught the piece to Uchiyama Reigetsu (内山嶺月) and Yamaue Getsuzan (山上月山). Orito's teacher was Onodera Genkichi (小野寺源吉), who was taught by the highly respected *komusô*, Hasegawa Tôgaku (長谷川東学). [Chart 2](#) shows the addition of Hasegawa, Onodera, Orito and Uchiyama and Yamaue to the lineage.

Orito Nyogetsu was a member of the Kinpu *ryû* Nezasa *ha* in Aomori, whose repertoire at the time did not include the Ôshû lineage “*Reibo*” (Kendo 1934b:39). How Kinpu *ryû* and, consequently, Orito Nyogetsu came to acquire the piece is described by Nyûi Kendo (乳井建道) in an article written in 1934 (1934b:39). Quoting from that article:

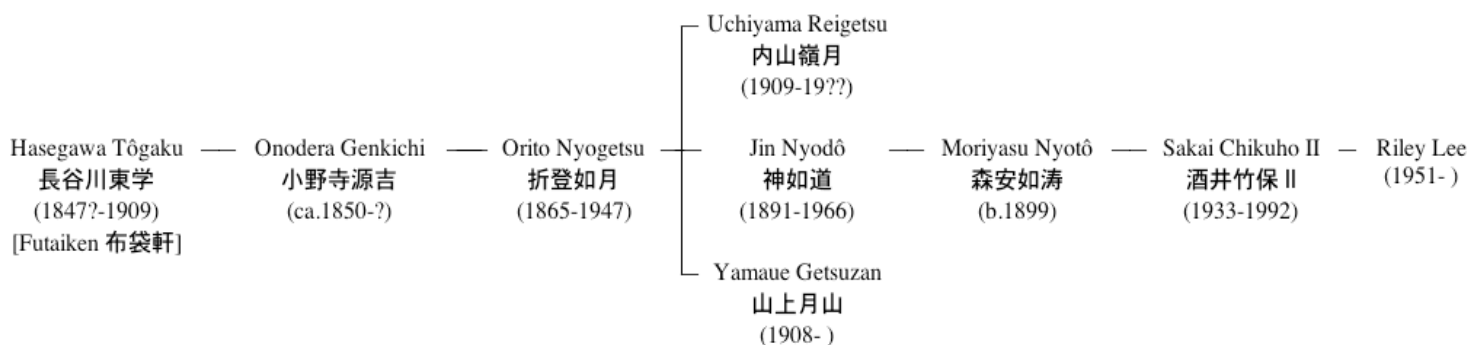
In around Meiji 20 (1888), Onodera Genkichi would come to Hirosaki City while on pilgrimages as a *komusô* and would sometimes perform the piece “*Reibo*” in front of the house of Nyûi Getsue [the head of the Kinpu *ryû* at that time]. On one occasion Nyûi was home, and hearing that Onodera's playing was quite good, invited the *komusô* inside his house. When Nyûi expressed the desire to have him play anew, Onodera performed the two pieces “*Reibo*” and “*Tsuru no sugomori*”. On hearing that he was such a strong player, Nyûi introduced Onodera to his students the next day. It was unanimously decided that Onodera should stay for three months and teach the members of the school the two pieces.

(Nyûi 1934b:39; translated by Lee)

Charts 1 and 2

Jin Nyodô 神如道 (1891-1966)	—	Moriyasu Nyotô 森安如涛 (1899-)	—	Sakai Chikuho II 酒井竹保 II (1933-1992)	—	Riley Lee (1951-)
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Genealogy Chart 1



Genealogy Chart 2

This brief description indicates the manner of transmission of *honkyoku* between lineages in the last century was quite different from methods employed for the same purpose today. Of particular interest is the willingness with which the head of a lineage (Nyûi) seemed to acknowledge and accept an outsider (Onodera). Nyûi did not merely recognize and acknowledge the technical (and, one might assume, spiritual) qualities of Onodera's *shakuhachi* playing, he even allowed Onodera to teach his students for three months. There is no hint of any of the "loss of face" that a *shakuhachi* player of Nyûi's position might experience today if confronted with similar circumstances. It is also interesting to note that Onodera was willing and able to suspend his regular routine, whatever that might have been, and stay for three months to teach Nyûi's students. The spontaneity and suddenness with which the whole affair occurred, and with which Onodera's three month tenure was decided seems to belong to another, less hectic age, quite unlike today's usual routines of solidly planned schedules and commitments.

Orito was a member of the group of Nyûi's students that learned "*Reibo*" and "*Tsuru no sugomori*" from Onodera. Onodera centered his activities around the temple Kannariji, which is apparently the reason Orito called the "*Reibo*" he learned from Onodera by the name "*Kannariji den 'Reibo'*". In any case, thanks to both Nyûi's and Onodera's generosity, the former in allowing his students to be taught by someone outside his lineage, and the latter for agreeing to teach, Orito was later able to transmit the piece to Jin. This allowed Jin to teach the piece to Moriyasu, from whom Chikuho II was able to learn it, thereby making it possible for me to receive the piece almost a century after the event described above.

Neither Orito, nor his students Uchiyama and Yamaue, referred to the piece as "*Shôganken reibo*", but rather by the titles "*Kannariji den 'Reibo'*" (金成寺伝「鈴慕」), "*Miyagi reibo*" (「宮城鈴慕」) and "*Onodera Genkichi den 'Reibo'*" (小野寺源吉伝「鈴慕」) respectively. The word *den* (伝) means 'transmission'. "*Kannariji den 'Reibo'*", therefore, can be translated as "*Reibo*" as transmitted through Kannari Temple' (Kannariji is a temple in Miyagi Prefecture in northern Japan), while "*Onodera Genkichi den 'Reibo'*" can mean "*Reibo*" as transmitted by Onodera Genkichi'.

Of the three generations consisting of, 1) Onodera; 2) Orito; and 3) Jin, Uchiyama and Yamaue; only Jin uses the word *Shôganken* in the title of the piece. In his own notation of this piece, Jin writes the title as “*Shôganken den ‘Reibo’*” (松巖軒伝「鈴慕」). Note that Jin changes the ideograph pronounced “gan” from the original 岩, used in the name of the sub-temple *Shôganken*, to 巖. Both have the same meaning, ‘boulder’. In place of either of these ideographs, Jin also used the ideograph “an” (安, ‘safety’), though less frequently (Jin 1980:49).

There are no other known *shakuhachi* players belonging to either Jin’s generation or the generation prior to his who used the word *Shôganken* in the title of a *honkyoku*. Those *shakuhachi* players in generations after Jin’s who do use the title “*Shôganken reibo*” seem to have adopted Jin’s use of the ideogram 巖 in place of the original 岩. Three generations before Jin, Oikawa Kakuyû (及川霍友), did use the word *Shôganken* in the title of a “*Reibo*” piece he performed, but as will be shown below, Oikawa’s lineage and the piece he performed are different from those of Jin. Furthermore, Oikawa used the original character 岩 in his title. We may assume, then, that use of the words “*Shôganken reibo*”, written with the ideographs 松巖軒鈴慕, as a title for the *honkyoku* in question originated with Jin Nyodô.

This assumption is supported by the fact that whenever the title “*Shôganken reibo*” is used for a piece, whoever uses it is in some way connected with Jin, even if they have not learned the piece directly from Jin or indirectly from one of his students. This is the case with Moriyasu, Chikuho II and his brother Shôdô. Another example is the piece “*Shôganken reibo*” found on a recently released cassette recording of Yokoyama Katsuya’s performance of various *koten honkyoku* (1988). Yokoyama’s primary source of *honkyoku* was his teacher, Watazumi dôso (海童道祖), from whom he learned a piece entitled “*Reibo*”. Yokoyama differentiates “*Reibo*” from “*Shôganken reibo*”, however, and includes both pieces in the same collection of recordings of *honkyoku* (1988). In his book *Shakuhachi gaku no miryoku*, Yokoyama implies that he became acquainted with “*Shôganken reibo*” in part by listening to a recording of a performance by me (Yokoyama 1985:235). In a personal communication, Yokoyama stated that he used in part a notation of the piece written by Jin (Yokoyama 1989). Yokoyama uses the ideograph 巖, associated with Jin’s lineage, in writing “*Shôganken reibo*”. Thus, there are reasons for classifying Yokoyama’s performance of “*Shôganken reibo*” as being related to the Jin lineage, if only indirectly.

The question of transmission is further complicated, however, by the fact that Yokoyama also learned from Watazumi a piece entitled “*Furin*” (風林), which, as played by Watazumi, preliminary analysis has shown to be quite similar to “*Shôganken reibo*” of Jin’s lineage (see pp.485-490). It is not known who taught Watazumi the piece; Watazumi says that no one taught it to him (Yokoyama 1989). Yokoyama also learned “*Furin*” from Watazumi.

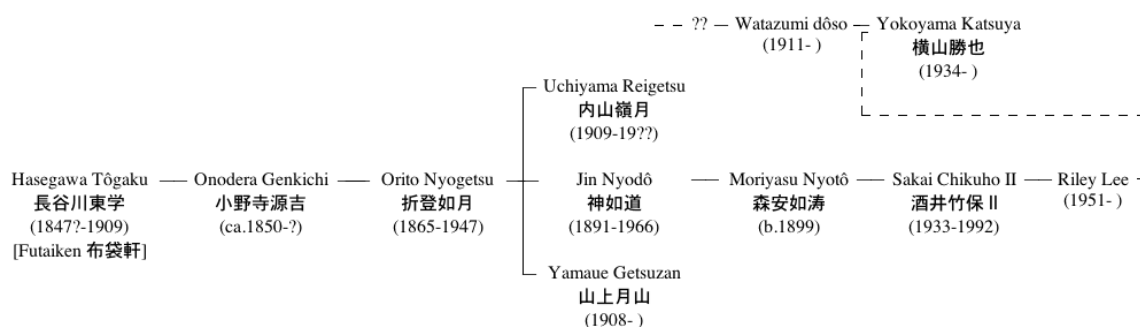
Yokoyama further stated in a personal communication with me (1989) that in the mid 1980s he began using the title “*Shôganken reibo*” for the piece Watazumi played as “*Furin*” because he recognized both pieces to be the same. It is not clear why Yokoyama does not, in his discussion of “*Shôganken reibo*” in his book, precisely point out that his own “*Shôganken reibo*” is basically a variant of Watazumi’s

“*Furin*”. A possible explanation for Yokoyama’s deciding to adopt the name “*Shôganken reibo*” is that it is much more famous than the title “*Furin*”. The similarities and differences as revealed by transcription and analysis of Watazumi’s and Yokoyama’s “*Furin*” on one hand, and Jin’s and his students’ “*Shôganken reibo*” on the other hand, will be discussed later in this thesis. [Chart 3](#) shows the addition of Watazumi and Yokoyama to the genealogy chart.

4.3.2 “*Futaiken reibo*” Lineage

Jin learned what will be shown by analysis (pp.485-490) to be a second version of “*Ôshû kei ‘Reibo’*” from Konashi Kinsui (小梨錦水). Jin gave this second version of “*Reibo*” the title “*Futaiken den ‘Reibo’*” (布袋軒伝[鈴慕], ‘*Reibo* transmitted at the Futai sub-temple’). As was the case with “*Shôganken reibo*”, this version of the piece was not known by this title before Jin. Kinsui may have called the piece simply “*Reibo*” as this is the name most of his students used. As mentioned above, the version that Jin called “*Shôganken reibo*” was referred to by his teacher, Orito, as “*Kannariji den ‘Reibo’*”. Perhaps Jin thought the name “*Reibo*” was not specific enough, in light of his having been taught at least two versions of the piece, or it could have been simply that “*Futaiken den ‘Reibo’*” - “*Shôganken den ‘Reibo’*” made a better sounding pair than “*Reibo*” – “*Kannariji den reibo*”.

Chart 3



The question of who taught Kinsui is somewhat complicated. Uramoto (Inagaki, ed. 1985:130), Tukitani (in NOD 1989:42), Yamaue (1984:167) and Izui and Takahashi (in Yamaue 1984:174) agree that Kinsui’s first teacher was the *komusô*, Kurosawa Shôun (黒沢照雲). One of Kinsui’s students, Uramoto Setchô (浦本浙潮) (Inagaki, ed. 1985:130) states, however, that Kinsui was taught by the last head priest of Futaiken and highly regarded *komusô* Hasegawa Tôgaku (長谷川東学) (see p.178). Kurosawa Kinko, one of the most famous *komusô*, was also associated with the sub-temple Futaiken, further elevating Kinsui’s credibility.

Izui Shizan (出井靜山) and Takahashi Ryochiku (高橋呂竹) (Yamaue 1984:174) write that: 1) in a “direct conversation” with Gotô Tôsui (後藤桃水), Tôsui stated that he had heard Tôgaku and Kinsui perform the piece “*Reibo*” together and that though there were differences in details, the timings, passages, etc., they fit extremely well; 2) according to Orito Nyogetsu (see above), Kinsui was expelled (*hamon* 破門) by

Tôgaku and didn't learn the piece "*Reibo*" at all; and 3) according to *shakuhachi* player and authority Takahashi Kûzan (高橋空山, unrelated to Ryochiku), Kinsui studied with Tôgaku for only a very short time, barely learning anything from him. In his own book on *shakuhachi*, Kûzan writes:

From the latter Taisho (1912-1926) and during the early Shôwa (1926-1989) periods, in Sendai there was a person named Konashi Kinsui who was blind and was a *shakuhachi* player. He imitated the piece "*Ôshû reihô*" and played a condensed version of this. There are people who say that this piece is the same as that transmitted by the sub-temple Shôganken in what is now Hanamaki City, Iwate Prefecture...or by some other temple. In this, however, they are completely mistaken. I have met Kinsui frequently, and during the many investigations I made to various temples in the early part of Shôwa, such as those mentioned earlier, such a piece [as Kinsui performed] absolutely did not exist.

Takahashi 1988:285

Although there are contradictions in the above statements, all of the above writers do, in fact, agree upon one thing: that Hasegawa Tôgaku is considered the well-spring of authority from which all versions of "*Ôshû kei 'Reibo*" flowed (Yamaue 1984:167; Izui and Takahashi in Yamaue 1984:174; Tukitani in NOD 1989:47; Takahashi 1979:285; Uramoto 1985:130). Consequently, it is imperative that any *shakuhachi* player who places importance upon the authenticity of his version of "*Ôshû kei 'Reibo*" be able to trace a piece-specific lineage from himself through his ancestors directly back to Hasegawa Tôgaku. Uramoto states that his teacher, Kinsui, studied with Tôgaku, thus creating a link between the "source" and himself that spans only two generations.

Taken one step further, this process of authenticating one's own piece requires not only a demonstration of proof of a direct line of transmission between, in this case, Tôgaku and oneself, but also the discrediting of any other line of transmission that might rival one's own. As happens universally in religion and in other areas of human society, including that of *shakuhachi*, this latter step seems to have been taken by Kûzan and, according to Izui and Takahashi, also by Nyogetsu, both of whom are not connected with the Kinsui lineage.

In contrast, Izui and Takahashi, in their role as unbiased editors to Yamaue's book, try to balance Kûzan's and Nyogetsu's negative accounts of Kinsui's lineage with a "direct" quote from Gotô Tôsui stating that he could hear virtually no difference between Tôgaku's and Kinsui's performance of "*Reibo*". Izui and Takahashi (in Yamada 1984:174) make Gotô's account more credible by pointing out that Gotô himself was originally a student of Tôgaku, but immediately afterwards undermine that credibility by further explaining that Gotô became Kinsui's student, the latter evidenced by Gotô's *shakuhachi* name, Tôsui.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ It is common practice for *shakuhachi* players of the same lineage to share a character in their professional name. Both Kinsui and Tôsui share the character *sui* (水, water).

In this author's opinion (whose objectivity is reinforced by his being in both the Kinsui and Nyogetsu lineages) any doubts as to the credibility of Kinsui's "*Reibo*" are more than allayed by the piece itself, or more precisely, by performing it, a masterpiece among *shakuhachi honkyoku*.

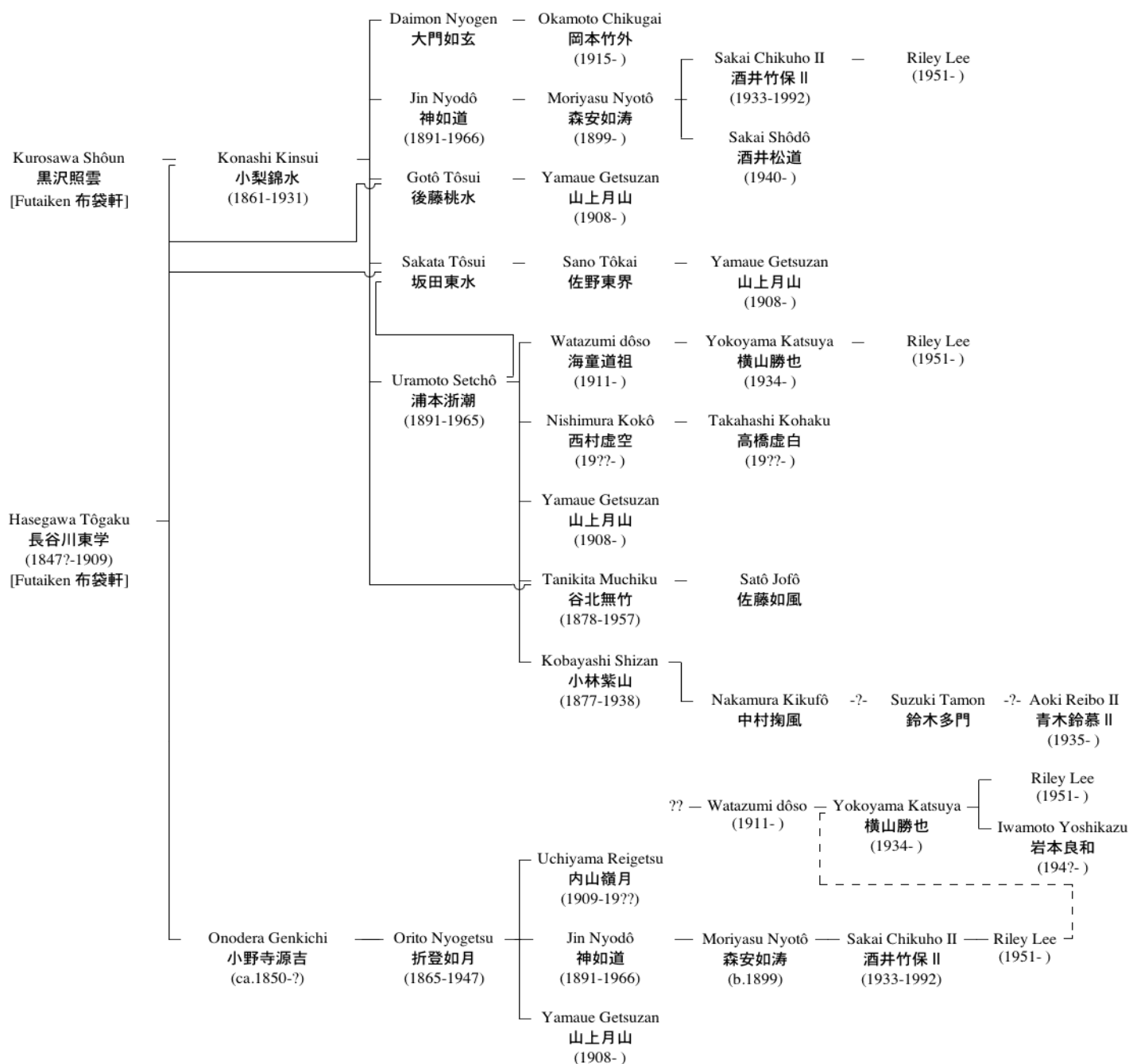
In any case, Konashi Kinsui taught his version of "*Reibo*" to many others besides Jin, including Uramoto Setcho, whose many students may have included Watazumi, who in turn taught it to Yokoyama. The lineage chart of the "*Ôshû kei 'Reibo'*" becomes quite complex with the inclusion of Konashi Kinsui, Uramoto Setchô and their students (see [Chart 4](#)).

4.3.3 A Third Lineage of Transmission of the *Ôshû* Family of the "*Reibo*" Piece

The possible third line of transmission of the "*Ôshû kei 'Reibo'*" is much simpler. As with the Kinsui lineage, this lineage traces itself back to Hasegawa Tôgaku, with the added input of another *komusô*, Genkô Taishû (元光退秀), as follows: the previously mentioned Takahashi Kûzan was taught by Okazaki Meidô (岡崎明道), whose teacher was Oikawa Kakuyû (及川霍友). As is claimed to be the case with Konashi Kinsui, Oikawa also had two teachers, Hasegawa Tôgaku and Genkô Taishû (see [Chart 5](#)).

This lineage is particularly interesting because both Oikawa and one of his teachers, Genkô, were associated with the sub-temple Shôganken. As mentioned earlier, Oikawa, like Jin, used the title "*Shôganken reibo*". But unlike Jin's use of the ideograph 巖 for *gan*, Oikawa used the ideograph 岩 for *gan*. Oikawa chose the same ideograph that was used in the name of the original *komusô* temple, Shôganken. Even though Kûzan emphasizes the connection between Oikawa, who was his teacher's teacher, and Tôgaku, it is Oikawa's other teacher, Genkô, and the association of both Oikawa and Genkô with the sub-temple Shôganken that are important, for the following reason.

Chart 4



NOTE:

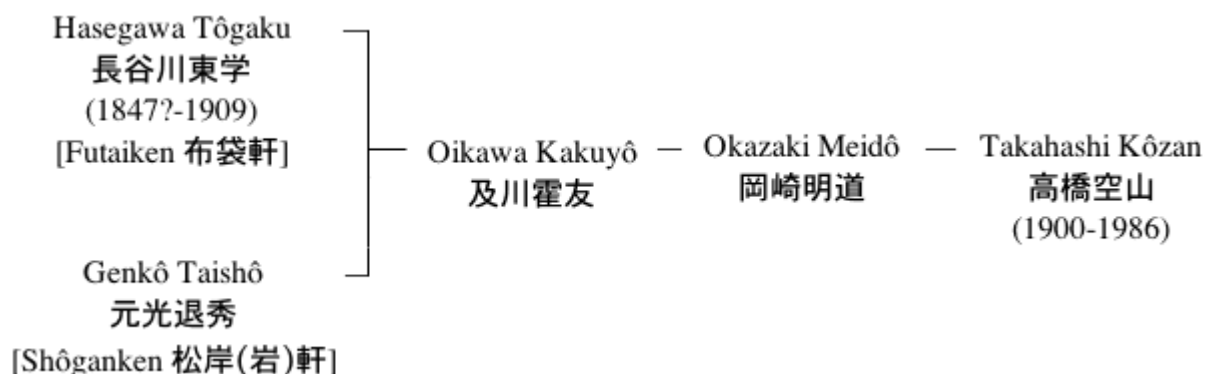
- - - - indicates indirect transmission through recordings.

Dates are given where known.

‘?’ indicates unsubstantiated, but possible transmission.

[Futaiken 布袋軒], etc., indicates the sub-temple with which the was affiliated.

Chart 5



The other two main lineages of the “*Ôshû kei 'Reibo'*” stem from Hasegawa Tôgaku, one stream flowing through Onodera and the other through Konashi Kinsui. Tôgaku was the head priest of the sub-temple Futaiken. Therefore, both of these lineages originated at Futaiken, even though Jin seems to have arbitrarily given the title “*Shôganken reibo*” to a piece that had been transmitted to him through Onodera. Even if Kinsui’s somewhat controversial relationship with Tôgaku is discounted, his other teacher, Kurosawa Shôun was also associated with Futaiken.

Assuming the details of the lineage chart are correct, it is only the Genkô - Oikawa - Okazaki lineage that can rightly claim the title “*Shôganken reibo*”, the “‘*Reibo*’ as transmitted at Shôganken”. Because of the custom of *ichiji ichiritsu* (一寺一律, one temple, one melody), it is reasonable to assume that the Shôganken version of “*Reibo*” differed from the Futaiken version.

Ironically, according to Izui and Takahashi (in Yamaue 1984:173), Okazaki used the name “*Futaiken reibo*” to refer to this piece, even though his teacher used the name “*Shôganken den reibo*”. Equally inconsistent is Kûzan’s use of the title “*Ôshû reihô*” (奥州鈴法) when referring in his book, *Fuke shû shi* (普化宗史) (1979:285) to the piece transmitted from Shôganken.

4.4 Lineage Chart of the Transmission of “*Ôshû kei 'Reibo'*”

[Chart 6](#) is for “*Ôshû kei 'Reibo'*”, showing the three main branches of transmission, including names that have not been mentioned previously. It is based on a similar chart compiled by the Syakuhati kenkyû kai (Shakuhachi Research Group), with reliance upon a chart by Tukitani (NOD 1989:47), while I was an active member of the group in Japan in 1989. Tukitani’s chart was largely substantiated by Yamaue (1984) and Takahashi (1979).

Tukitani’s original chart, the Shakuhachi Research Group’s chart, and this subsequent lineage chart are all based upon either direct observation, as in the case of performers directly known by the author, or upon writings and diagrams of *shakuhachi* players who appear in the chart, in particular those of Yamaue Getsuzan.

The lineage chart of the Shakuhachi Research Group, and the chart presented here differ from all other charts of *shakuhachi* lineages in their focus upon extant recordings. The charts were devised by first collecting as many recordings as possible of what seemed likely to be “*Reibo*” pieces of the Ōshū lineage, and then listing the performers of the recordings, their teachers and then the teacher’s teachers, etc. The lineages of the performers of the recordings were traced as far back in time as possible, using all available data, including old lineage charts. In this way, a comparative analysis based upon transcriptions of actual performance recordings could be made between any and all branches represented in the chart. The result is a lineage chart believed to be more comprehensive in its representation of various lines through which “*Reibo*” has been and is being transmitted than previous Ōshū lineage charts, even though many individuals included in earlier charts, such as Yamaue’s eleven students (Yamaue 1984:167), are omitted.

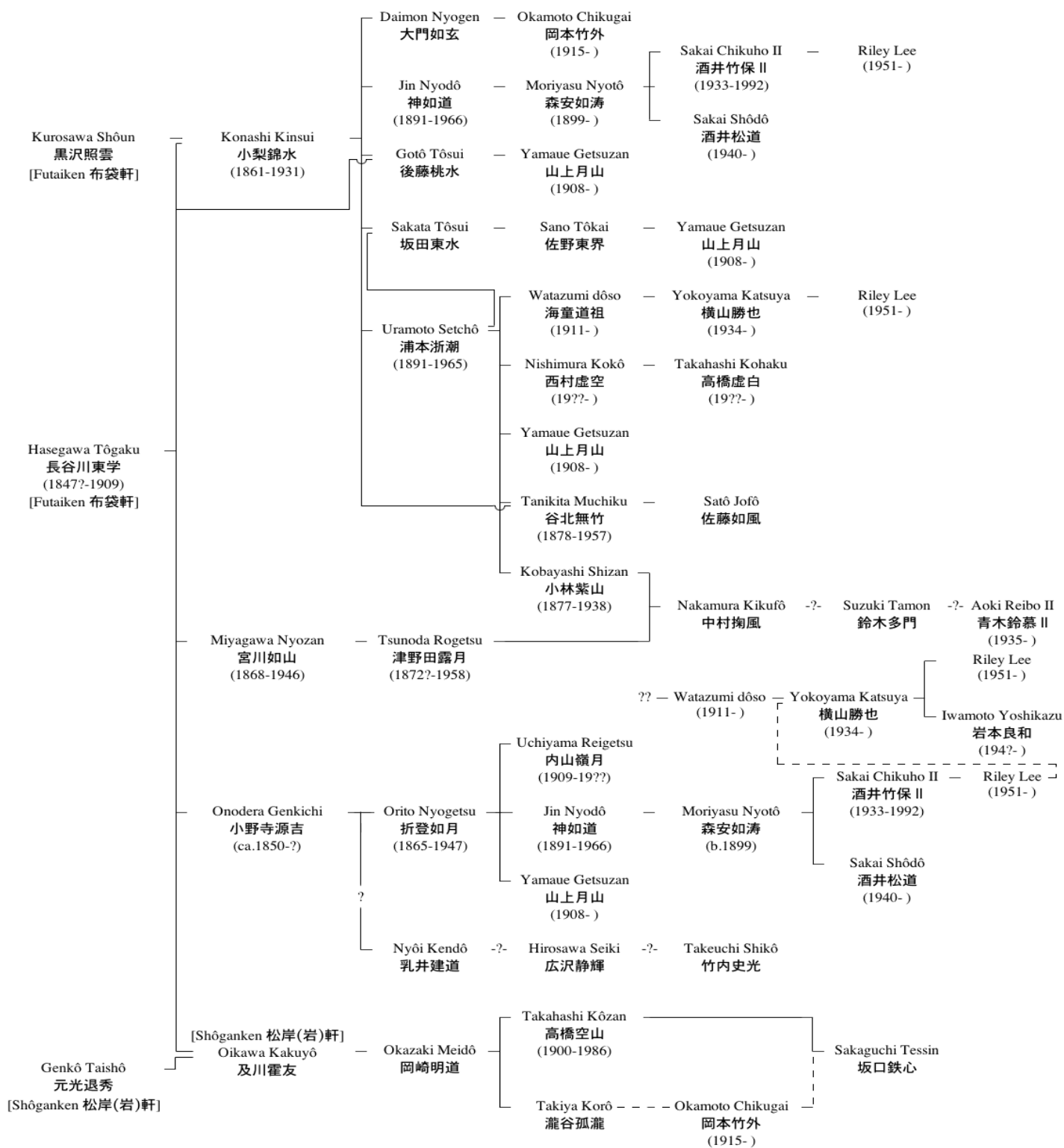
It should be emphasized that the chart is necessarily limited to *shakuhachi* players who are known to have recorded performances of “*Reibo*”, and to the teachers of these players. It is, therefore, far from exhaustive; there is no way of telling, for example, how many people may have learned “*Reibo*” or how many players are performing versions of it today.

As far as possible, the chart is piece-specific. That is, it shows only who taught whom “*Ōshū kei ‘Reibo’*”. Any individual included in the chart may have had one or more other teachers, among whom may have been his principal teacher. For example, Watazumi is said to have learned the piece from Uramoto Setchō, but Setchō was by no means his main teacher. In fact, as mentioned above, Watazumi regularly claims that he had no teachers from whom he learned any of his *honkyoku*. Similarly, Aoki Reibo II (2世青木鈴慕) is believed to have learned his “*Miyagino Reibo*” (宮城野鈴慕) from either Suzuki Tamon (鈴木多聞) or Nakamura Kikufū (中村菊風), neither of whom was his primary teacher; his father, Aoki Reibo I, was. A number of others in the chart have a similar secondary relationship with the person who transmitted “*Reibo*” to them.

In addition, it is highly probable that most persons included in [Chart 6](#) learnt from more than one teacher. For example, Takahashi Kūzan lists as his teachers, not only Okazaki Meidō as given in [Chart 6](#), but also Miyakawa Nyozan (宮川如山), Takase Sukeji (高瀬助治), Kobayashi Haō (小林波鷗), Komichi Toyotarō (小路豊太郎), Kobayashi Shizan (小林紫山), Katsuura Shōzan (勝浦正山) and others (Kamisanō 1974:21). A lineage chart depicting each player’s primary teacher, or primary influence, would be quite different from [Chart 6](#), which shows only in part the transmission of a single family of pieces.

That charts such as the one presented here can only be simplified representations of “reality” can be seen from the following example. Jin claimed that he learned the piece that he called “*Shōganken reibo*” from Orito Nyogetsu,

Chart 6



NOTE FOR CHART 6:

- - - - indicates indirect transmission through recordings.

Dates are given where known.

“?” indicates unsubstantiated, but possible transmission.

[Futaiken 布袋軒], etc., indicates the sub-temple with which the was affiliated.

yet Nyogetsu asserted that he in fact never taught the piece to Jin. Actually, Jin did study the piece under Orito, but according to Yamaue, as Jin began to gain fame throughout Japan as an authority of the *honkyoku*, Orito told him that if he was going to be transmitting the piece around the country, he had better take more lessons from Orito to make sure he really knew the piece. Jin never took Orito's advice, so Orito began stating categorically that he had never taught Jin the piece (Yamaue 1987:7).

An added difficulty in creating an accurate and comprehensive lineage chart such as the one presented here, arises from social customs and restraints at work in *shakuhachi* society. As explained above, Chikuho II, as a future *iemoto*, may have felt limited in choosing whom he could learn new *honkyoku* from or, at least whom he could publicly acknowledge having learned from, because of the possible risk to the rank and status of the *iemoto* position, as well as the possible loss of esteem both personally and for the *ryû*. Such social constraints make it problematic for high ranking players to increase their performance and teaching repertoire.

Performance and teaching of modern compositions, in comparison to traditional *honkyoku* that have been transmitted through long lineages and are frequently considered to be the exclusive property of those lineages, are less constrained by social forces. This is especially true in the case of contemporary *shakuhachi* compositions written in staff notation. There are two main methods frequently used to overcome problems of increasing one's repertoire of traditional pieces. One method is to create original compositions. The second method is to proceed to introduce a traditional piece to one's repertoire, but then to ignore the question of lineage entirely.

In a personal communication, Tukitani uncertainly (OC 1989) suggested that Aoki Reibo may have learned his version of "*Reibo*", which he calls "*Miyagino reibo*", from Suzuki Tamon, who may have learned it from Nakamura Kikufû (see [Chart 6](#)). Tukitani based her belief on what she had been told by Tamon and others, and is indirectly supported by the fact that both Nakamura and one of his teachers, Kobayashi Shizan (小林紫山), used the name "*Miyagino reibo*", the same name that Aoki uses.

Though I had the opportunity to ask Aoki about his piece "*Miyagino reibo*" during an interview with him on October 15, 1989, I made the conscious decision to avoid the issue, believing that to pursue the subject might be seen as tactless. As conjecture, Aoki's present position as head of his lineage may preclude him from acknowledging Nakamura as a source.

Although development of any *shakuhachi* lineage chart will be plagued with problems similar to those discussed above, such charts are useful in outlining lines of transmission. The chart presented in this thesis is particularly useful in showing the transmission of "*Ôshû kei 'Reibo'*". The lineage chart is only the beginning of the task this thesis attempts to accomplish, that is, to expand the knowledge and elucidate the processes of transmission of *shakuhachi honkyoku*. The chart shows where to look next, what questions to ask and whose performances to compare. In order to answer the many questions generated by the chart, transcriptions of recordings are essential. Before transcribing and analyzing the various performances represented on the "*Ôshû*

kei 'Reibo' lineage chart, however, the subject of transmission must first be discussed further. How members of the *shakuhachi* tradition define transmission and what is thought to be transmitted in the case of the *shakuhachi* tradition in general, and of *koten honkyoku* in particular, is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

ONTOLOGY OF TRANSMISSION; THE NATURE OF THE REALITY OF *HONKYOKU* TRANSMISSION

The main subject of this thesis is the transmission of *shakuhachi honkyoku*, specifically the *honkyoku* known as “*Reibo*”. The first chapter discussed the issue of insiders and outsiders because of the importance given that issue by members of the *shakuhachi* tradition, and because of the influences the concepts of insider and outsider have had on how the tradition has been and is being transmitted. The second and third chapters surveyed the literature on the *shakuhachi*, and presented a summary of the history of the *shakuhachi*. Together these chapters provided a background of information against which the subject of transmission of *honkyoku* within the *shakuhachi* tradition could be more clearly seen. Chapter 4 focused upon the *honkyoku* “*Reibo*” of the Ôshû district and introduced a lineage chart depicting the lines of transmission of that *honkyoku* through selected *shakuhachi* performers.

The following chapter broadens the discussion of *honkyoku* transmission in the *shakuhachi* tradition beyond the relatively superficial parameters discussed in Chapter 4. In this chapter, the fundamental question of this thesis will be addressed: What is being transmitted in the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition? From this first question are generated two other major questions. The second question, and questions related to it are: How does the transmission take place? In what context is the transmission accomplished? Who is transmitting, and to whom? The third and final major question looks at the interaction between the first two: How does the manner in which the transmission occurs affect, and is affected by, that which is being transmitted? What is the relationship between the process of transmission and the conception of *honkyoku*?

These three issues are best illuminated by looking at multiple points of view, that is, by noting what individual players themselves state and by examining what the notations and transcriptions of performances show. These viewpoints are numerous and sometimes conflicting. My own point of departure, discussed in chapter one, will affect how the three issues are presented. As a *shakuhachi* player and performer of *koten honkyoku* I am primarily interested in looking at, through the verbal or written medium of this thesis, the same tradition of insight that is inherent in the act of performance.

Before looking at the formal elements of transmission processes in the *honkyoku* tradition, I would like to explore certain cognate positions within three different but related realms of discourse. The first of these is the concept of subjectivity versus objectivity. The second area of discussion is theories of orality and literacy. The third realm of discourse is the relationship between performance and documentation. These three areas will be viewed from the western theoretical position; by examining post-modernist critiques of subjectivity/objectivity and by looking at western theoretical writings on orality/literacy and performance/documentation. Cognates of these postulates that can be found within Japanese culture will also be discussed. These include the distinction of Taoism or Zen and Confucianism, manifestations of orality/literacy in Japanese culture and examples of the role of documents and

performances in Japan. All of the discussions will lead to the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition itself, within whose transmission processes can be seen these same sets of polarity.

5.1 Concepts of Subjectivity, Objectivity, and Sound

The Oxford English Dictionary (1971:3383) defines the verb “to transmit” as “to cause (a thing) to pass, go, or be conveyed to another person, place, or thing; to send across an intervening space; to convey, transfer”. The second meaning given is “to convey or communicate (usually something immaterial) *to* another or others; to pass on, especially by inheritance or heredity; to hand down”. Both of these definitions include an “object” being transmitted, i.e., “a thing” or “something immaterial”.

Barwick (1988:2) points out that research on transmission in cultural studies (including musicological ones) is usually document-centred, with written material such as transcriptions of performances, forming the data base used in the studies. Examples of such studies are those by Parry (1971) and Lord (1964). The written manuscript or transcription functions typically to objectify that which is being transmitted. These studies consequently imply that the transmission that is occurring fits the model presented by the conduit theory of communication, that is, “an item of information is passed or transmitted from person A to person B”. This in turn presupposes:

- 1) an object (an item of information or repertoire) having some sort of existence independent of persons A and B (and potentially representable in the form of a document), and
- 2) a means of transmission capable of completely transparent communication

(Barwick 1988:1-2)

The validity of these presuppositions is questioned by modern communication theories, which “admit neither the existence of the item of information as an entity outside its utterance or manifestation, nor the possibility of a transparent mode of communication, nor indeed the discrete subjectivity of the individual” (Barwick 1988:2). Despite this, musicologists typically record, transcribe, analyze and discuss musical performances from an “objective” viewpoint, treating the document not only as an accurate, but even a more exact substitute for the actual act of performance (Barwick 1988:2).

Barwick (1988:3) further argues that in concentrating on what is transmitted, that is, the “object” of transmission, one is forced to explain or, more accurately “explain away” any variation that might occur to that “object” during transmission. Thus, variation becomes a problem that must be explained away, leading to a preoccupation with defining the original, the authentic or the deep structure, in order to identify or construct the “sameness” that is necessary when talking about objects of transmission.

Returning to the topic of this thesis, Barwick’s position suggests that by answering the question, “What is transmitted?”, with simply *honkyoku* or “the piece ‘*Reibo*’”

one risks coming into conflict with the *shakuhachi* tradition's own view of the process of transmission. This would be especially true if one were to take performance documents, such as notated scores, transcriptions, and/or recordings of individual performances of the "*Reibo*" piece and view them as the object of transmission. This thesis will, therefore, attempt to avoid viewing the transmission of the *shakuhachi honkyoku* "*Reibo*" solely as the transmission of an "object" independent of its multiple utterances and manifestations, and separate from the process of its performance and those performing it.

It must be stated, however, that there exist some prominent members of the *shakuhachi* tradition who hold the opposite view, namely Inoue Shōei and to a lesser degree Aoki Reibo (see pp.288-295). Nonetheless, the nature of *honkyoku* as performed by many, if not most, players facilitates, even demands, the opposite viewpoint. "*Reibo*" does not exist as a distinct "object" or "piece", but rather only as a phenomenon that exists in performance, in a relatively constant state of flux.

Ideally, during the course of transmitting *honkyoku* from one person to another, an intuitive form of communication or transmission develops that is non-verbal, non-visual, non-auditory, non-analytical and non-logical. Without this form of transmission, which may be described as a sense of intuitive mutual perception on the part of both teacher and student, many believe that there is a chance that only the outer shell of the *honkyoku* might be transmitted and/or received, with no transmission of the "real essence" or "inner core" taking place. The "outer shell" becomes the "object" mentioned above.

Hisamatsu mentions this in *Hitori kotoba* (獨言, 'Monologue', ca.1830, reproduced in Gutzwiller 1983:169-174), one of three essays that are possibly the only surviving writing on *shakuhachi* by a practising *komusō* of the Fuke sect. Hisamatsu wrote, "To play only the outer form is not called playing *shakuhachi*, and has nothing to do with it. Be aware of this!" Hisamatsu further admonished the beginner to learn to play the "real essence" of *honkyoku*.

Not surprisingly, what exactly constitutes the "real essence" of *honkyoku* is never explicitly explained, possibly because the essence of *honkyoku* defies verbal explanation. It is like most fundamental Buddhist concepts, which are only "amenable to complete understanding through experience and definitions are inevitably inadequate" (Howard 1992a:35). Hisamatsu states in another essay, *Hitori mondō* (獨問答 1823, reproduced in Kurihara 1918:209-215), that, "the essence of playing is beyond reasoning". A strong parallel can be clearly seen between this aspect of the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition and Zen Buddhism, the essence of which has been described as, "an intuitive looking into the nature of things in contradistinction to the analytical or logical understanding of it" (Suzuki 1956:84).

The "essence of playing" mentioned by Hisamatsu is the concept of *śūnyatā*, the essential emptiness of all phenomena. *Śūnyatā* is a principle central to Zen Buddhism as well as to the entire Mahayana Buddhist tradition. It is, according to Yasutani-roshi, "that which is living, dynamic, devoid of mass, unfixed, beyond individuality or personality - the matrix of all phenomena" (Yasutani in Howard 1992a:31). Howard further elaborates on *śūnyatā* (also called *mu* in the Zen tradition), explaining, "The experience of 'realization' in Zen is to glimpse this essential principle of the

emptiness and unity of all things and thus to see that ultimate reality is identified with the intrinsic nature of things themselves” (Howard 1992a:31).

Whatever this indefinable “real essence” or “inner core” of *honkyoku* might be, according to members of the *honkyoku* tradition it is not such observable and quantifiable things as musical sound, and it cannot be attained by becoming an accomplished performer of advanced *shakuhachi* techniques. A contemporary *shakuhachi* player, Hanada Nobuhisa (花田伸久) quotes Rinzai: “In Buddha’s law there is no place for skill and usefulness” and elaborates by writing:

Just as a baby or a person sound asleep breathes naturally, in essence there is no good and bad in *shakuhachi* playing. A player who is said to be good is one who has abandoned all technique. A poor player is one who tries to play skillfully.

(Hanada, in Howard 1992a:33)

Kobayashi Shizan (小林紫山), thirty -fifth head of the Myōan lineage is quoted by Howard (1992b:10) as stating that even when the *shakuhachi* player fails to produce the desired note when blowing his instrument, “the unwanted sound should be savoured. In this way you come to appreciate the taste of true accomplishment, of art that is artless.” Suzuki (1960:69-70) states, “[t]he Essence is to be grasped, not the hearing, nor the sound. To take the latter for reality is the result of confused mentality”.

Despite the obvious lack of correlation between virtuosic production of sound and essence of *honkyoku*, this element of the *honkyoku* tradition is most commonly the subject of musical analysis in musicological studies. In other words, most of the analytical tools of the musicologist are impotent in defining and understanding the “inner core” of *honkyoku* and the intuitive means of transmitting it.

It is worthwhile to refer back to the modern communication theories summarized by Barwick, which deny the existence of both object and subject as separate, discrete entities within the dynamics of the communication of information.

This does not mean that the “outer shell” of *honkyoku*, the sound, is to be ignored and discarded. In another sense, musical sounds and performance techniques are exactly that which is transmitted in the *honkyoku* tradition. The Heart Sutra, one of Zen Buddhism’s most central texts, states that form is empty, but also that emptiness is form. In non-dualistic thinking, there is no separation of inner core from outer shell, or objectivity and subjectivity. Howard (1992a:30) points out that there is no duality between the two co-existent principles of ultimate reality and perceivable things. This is also expressed in Zen literature as the “relative” (the world of appearance) and “the absolute” (ultimate reality).

There is an object that is communicated, but it is separate from neither its subjective utterance nor its equally subjective reception. The object is the sound of *shakuhachi honkyoku*. The spiritual practices of the *shakuhachi*-playing members of the Fuke sect were based upon sound and hearing. Howard (1991:95-101) has suggested that these practices may have found their conceptual context in a Buddhist text probably written

in China in the seventh century. In the Sûrangama Sûtra, which has had a significant influence upon the Zen Buddhist tradition, the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Jap. Kannon 観音, literally ‘Seeing Sound’), the “One Who Hears the Sounds of the World”, describes how she attained enlightenment by initially meditating on hearing and sound.

An understanding of the sound that is *honkyoku* might be gained by first reflecting on the nature of sound itself. Ong deals with the subject of sound in his book *Orality and Literacy* (1982). He writes:

All sensation takes place in time, but sound has a special relationship to time unlike that of the other fields that register in human sensation. Sound exists only when it is going out of existence. It is not simply perishable but essentially evanescent, and it is sensed as evanescent....

There is no way to stop sound and have sound. I can stop a moving picture camera and hold one frame fixed on the screen. If I stop the movement of sound, I have nothing—only silence, no sound at all. All sensation takes place in time, but no other sensory field totally resists a holding action, stabilization, in quite this way.

(Ong 1982:31-32)

In Buddhism, all phenomena are viewed as having the impermanence of sound. The traditional Buddhist dictum, which states that “Everything perishes as soon as it arises”, denies duration and is, therefore, “the ultimate limit of momentariness” (Kim 1987:148). Just as the only sound that one ever hears is the sound of the present moment, one’s entire existence, including the other senses, exists entirely in the present. Dôgen, 12th c. Japanese Zen master, writes:

The present time under consideration is each individual’s absolute now. I think of the past, present, and future, and no matter how many periods—even tens of thousands of them—I may think of, they are the present moment, the absolute now. A person’s destiny lies necessarily in the present. In other words, the eyeballs are now, the nostrils are now.

(trans. by Kim, in Kim 1987:147)

Sound exists only at a particular location and a particular time, that is, the absolute Here and Now. Hence the power of sound and the power of classical *shakuhachi honkyoku*.

Another Zen Buddhist vantage point from which to view sound and its relationship with time is given rather transparently by Suzuki Shunryû:

We say, "To hear the sound of one hand clapping."⁵⁰ Usually the sound of clapping is made with two hands, and we think that clapping with one hand makes no sound at all. But actually, one hand *is* sound. Even though you do not hear it, there is sound. If you clap with two hands, you can hear the sound. But if sound did not already exist before you clapped, you could not make the sound. Before you make it there is sound. Because there is sound, you can make it, and you can hear it. Sound is everywhere. If you just practice it, there is sound. Do not try to listen to it. If you do not listen to it, the sound is all over. Because you try to hear it, sometimes there is sound and sometimes there is no sound.

(Suzuki S. 1970:60)

The sound made by one hand clapping is “absolute sound”, neither relative to nor dependent upon anything outside of itself, including time or location. In the *honkyoku* tradition, this concept is called *tettei on* (徹底音, literally ‘thorough’ or ‘complete sound’). *Tettei on* is translated as “absolute sound” by Gutzwiller (1983:248). The *shakuhachi* player strives to perform each *honkyoku* with *tettei on*; sometimes one hears it and sometimes one does not. One is striving to attain *tettei on* all one’s life and yet one’s first tentative sound on the *shakuhachi* is *tettei on*.⁵¹ It is “One Sound Attaining Buddhahood” (*ichi on jōbutsu*) (see below). It is the sound of enlightenment itself.

Sound is unique among phenomena perceived by the senses in its relationship to location as well as time, and the consequent illumination it sheds upon the concepts of interior and exterior. Ong calls this unique relationship or quality the “interiority of sound” (1982:71). Hearing is the best, if not the only, sense with which to perceive the interior of something from its exterior. Ong (1982:71) states, “Sounds all register the interior structures of whatever it is that produces them”, adding that the sounds of various musical instruments and human voices differ depending upon their interior structure. The perception of sound outside the structure which produces it is partly determined by the inside of the structure.

The concept of interior/exterior extends beyond the characteristics of sound. It is the concept of I/Thou, and of subject/object (see above, p.109). The interaction between interior and exterior is dealt with in the visual art tradition of the East. According to Izutsu (1975:1-2), as early as the 5th century in China, Hsieh Ho established six principles of Chinese painting. The first of the principles is entitled “Spiritual Tone Pulsating with Life” (Ch’i yun shêng tung). Applicable to *honkyoku* as much as to painting, states that:

⁵⁰ The *koan* (公案, literally ‘public plan’, a catechetical question for meditation) “What is the sound of one hand clapping?” is attributed to Japanese Zen Buddhist master Hakuin Ekaku (白隠慧覚 1686-1769).

⁵¹ The seemingly conflicting notion between an “absolute sound” (enlightenment) that requires a lifetime of effort to attain and an “absolute sound” that is effortlessly made from the very beginning is dealt with in the Buddhist tradition. For example, see Kim (1985) on Dogen’s thoughts concerning the dialectical relationship between acquired enlightenment (始覚, *shikaku*) and original enlightenment (本覚, *honkaku*).

...there must be a perfect, harmonious correspondence realized between the inner rhythm of man and the life rhythm of the external Nature in such a way that, as a result, an indefinable spiritual tone pervades the whole space of the picture, vitalizing the latter in the most subtle way and imparting metaphysical significance to the objects depicted, whatever they might be. When a painter succeeds in actualizing this principle, his work will be filled with a peculiar kind of spiritual energy in rhythmic pulsation itself, in which the spirit of man will be in direct communion with the inner reality of Heaven and Earth.

(In Izutsu 1975:1-2)⁵²

Honkyoku performance, when accompanied in a manner which is harmonious with interior and exterior rhythms, is also filled with an indefinable spiritual energy transcending the performer, and which unifies the human spirit with all of nature.

Looking at the qualities of sound once more, Ong (1982:72) observes further that, “Sight isolates, sound incorporates”. Vision dissects the entire panorama; one can only look at the one thing at a time. Yet one hears all of the sounds around one.

By contrast with vision, the dissecting sense, sound is thus a unifying sense. A typical visual ideal is clarity and distinctness, a taking apart.... The auditory ideal, by contrast, is harmony, a putting together.

(Ong 1982:72)

The unifying quality of sound is also recognized in the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition. In the well-known *shakuhachi* dictum *ichi on jôbutsu* (一音成仏, ‘one sound attaining Buddhahood’), the “one sound” is frequently given the meaning of a single note played on a single *shakuhachi*. Howard (1992b:6) translates *ichi on jôbutsu* as “enlightenment in a single sound”, which identifies the blowing of a single sound with the expression of pure realization. It is “an expression of a momentary experience of insight or realization triggered after long cultivation through the agency of sound” (Howard 1992b:6).

It is not necessarily incorrect to think of *ichi on jôbutsu* as meaning simply that the sound of the *shakuhachi* is so potent that it is even possible for a *shakuhachi* player to attain Buddhahood by merely performing a single note on *shakuhachi*. It does demonstrate, however, only a partial understanding of the expression. It is not any particular potency unique to the sound of *shakuhachi* that is enlightenment. Any sound and all sounds are capable of triggering enlightenment. Zen master Yamada Kôun Roshi states:

When your consciousness has become ripe by true zazen--pure like clear water, like a serene mountain lake, not moved by any wind—then anything may serve as a medium for enlightenment.

⁵² For an illuminating discussion of the many similarities between painting traditions in Japan and the *shakuhachi* tradition, both as activities of Zen Buddhism, see Howard 1992b).

Furthermore, though enlightenment may indeed be attained by blowing one note on *shakuhachi*, the expression *ichi on jôbutsu* is far more charged with meaning. First of all, it is not “sounds” in general that is “Becoming Buddha”. Embedded in the expression *ichi on jôbutsu* is the understanding that the “One Sound” is not “two or more” sounds. It is also not “sound” as a separate entity, that is, an object to be perceived by the listener (another separate entity) and categorized as something that is this and not that. The unified “One Sound” is Absolute Sound (*tettei on*), limited by neither time nor space.

It is therefore every sound that has ever emanated, is emanating, and will ever emanate from all *shakuhachi*, past, present and future. All *shakuhachi* are resonating with Buddhahood, a veritable cacophony of enlightenment. Taking the meaning of “one sound” even further, all sound from the unimaginable roar of a volcanic eruption to the inaudible sound of an autumn leaf alighting on the grass, the noise of all activities of all humanity, and in fact all creation, all form, all matter, all thoughts, and all energy is the “one sound” becoming Buddha. In this light, the single sound emanating from one’s own bamboo flute is the very essence of what is being transmitted in the *honkyoku* tradition. It is in the spirit of this concept that this study has been undertaken.

5.2 Orality, Zen, and the *Shakuhachi Honkyoku*

The above discussion of the nature of sound and how it is treated within the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition leads to an important observation of *honkyoku*: the sounds that make up *honkyoku* have been transmitted primarily through an oral tradition. This single observation leads to a number of others, because all oral traditions share many elements which differentiate them from written traditions. Though the use of notation is found in the *honkyoku* tradition today, it was primarily an oral one before this century, with the extensive use of notation, hand-written and printed, dating only from the end of the 19th century (Lee 1986:87-89). I will argue below that the *honkyoku* tradition is still largely an oral one, which consequently affects the nature of *honkyoku* in predictable ways.

Seeger has suggested that the interesting thing about the oral/written paradigm was not the difference between the two but their “inextricably connected” relationship with each other (In Nettl 1983:187). This relationship can be readily seen in much of the *honkyoku* tradition. Some of the changes that may have occurred in the *shakuhachi* tradition because of the use of written, printed, and recorded forms have been discussed elsewhere (Lee 1988).

The following discussion introduces the subject of orality and related topics as well as theories of orality that have been developed during this century, especially as they pertain to *honkyoku*. Similarities between the *honkyoku* tradition and other oral traditions are also examined in so far as they might shed light on the question central to this section: what is being transmitted.

One of the most comprehensive works on the subject of oral and written traditions is Walter J. Ong's *Orality and Literacy* (1982). Ong is concerned basically with what he calls "primary oral cultures," or oral cultures untouched by writing. Neither the *honkyoku* tradition nor Zen are products of a "primary oral culture". In fact, in this century few cultures that might be thought of as non-literate have had no contact with literacy. Aboriginal Australia is considered one of the most conspicuously "oral" cultures extant today despite contact with literate European culture to varying degrees over the past one hundred to two hundred years⁵³ (Clunies Ross 1983:17). Even after writing is introduced into a culture, as in ancient Greece, there persists an "oral state of mind", "a mode of consciousness...a vocabulary and syntax, which [are] not that of a literate bookish culture" (Havelock 1963:41). When applied to traditions that retain vestiges of orality within a largely literate context, theories of orality may lose their economy, but not their usefulness in helping to formulate a description of those traditions. *Honkyoku* is one such tradition.

Ong's main premise is that there is a distinctly "oral" and a quite different "literate" mentality; the world seen through the eyes of orality is *not* the same world of the literate. The human experience has historically been overwhelmingly oral both in terms of time (only 6000 years of literacy within at least a 50,000 year existence) and numbers (of a possible tens of thousands of languages spoken by the human race, only 106 have had a writing system developed enough to produce literature) (Ong 1982:2,7). Yet those of us who belong to a modern literate society are so conditioned by our literacy as to be virtually unable to "conceive of an oral universe of communication of thought except as a variant of a literate universe" (1982:2).

According to Havelock, the oral mind, at least in ancient Greece, is a mind unconscious of itself, incapable of conceiving that:

"I" am one thing and the tradition is another; that "I" can stand apart from the tradition and examine it; that "I" can and should break the spell of its hypnotic force; that "I" should divert some at least of my mental powers away from memorization and direct them instead into channels of critical inquiry and analysis.

(Havelock 1963:200)

Havelock concludes, "The doctrine of the autonomous psyche is the counterpart of the rejection of the oral culture" (1963:200).

The dichotomy of inside/outside, of an "I" that is separate from the tradition or from anything else is, in the context of Zen Buddhist thought an illusionary construct of the mind. It is related to the concepts of interiority and exteriority, discussed above. In a lecture entitled "The Interior and Exterior in Zen Buddhism", Izutsu (1975:23) speaks of "the sudden realization of the ontological transparency of all things, including both the things existing in the 'external' world and the human subject which is ordinarily

⁵³ Some members of the Pintupi tribe in Western Australia remained untouched by literate society until the 1980s.

supposed to be looking at them from the outside. Both the ‘external’ things and the ‘internal’ of man divest themselves of their ontological opaqueness, become totally transparent, pervade each other, and become submerged into one.”

Though typically associated with Eastern philosophies, such thoughts have also long been a part of the Western spiritual tradition. For example, Jesus is quoted in the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas as saying:

When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below, and when you make the male and the female one and the same....then you will enter [the Kingdom].

(quoted in Aitken 1984:130)

In playing *shakuhachi honkyoku*, as with Zen Buddhist practice, the separation of the “I” from the tradition is transcended. In the act of performing *honkyoku*, the performer experiences an unselfconscious mind, in which differentiation between the performer, the performing, and the *shakuhachi* ceases to be. These are “the three wheels” (the actor, the action, and the thing acted upon) in the Buddhist sutra which states that all three are “vacant” (Aitken 1990:109). A fourth vacant wheel is added here, the performance or sound produced. Wumen warns “Don’t be victimized by sounds; don’t follow up on forms”, stating further “If you listen with your ear, it is hard to understand. If you hear with your eye, you are intimate at last.” (Aitken 1990:107).

The concept of critical inquiry and analysis simply does not exist in the mind of the *honkyoku* performer. Indicative of this is the lack of music treatises or analyses of the music of the *honkyoku* written by *honkyoku* performers.⁵⁴ To my knowledge, the few musical analyses of *honkyoku* that exist in Japanese, are all written by Tukitani, a non-performing scholar (see Chapter 2).

Sounds, especially words, have power, particularly in an oral rather than literate frame of mind. “Sound cannot be sounding without the use of power,” Ong points out, adding, “All sound, and especially oral utterance, which comes from inside living organisms, is ‘dynamic’” (1982:32). In most Western cultures this idea is epitomized by the utterance, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God.” The “Word” is sound in its supreme power.

Zen also recognizes this special characteristic of sound. In many cases recorded in Zen literature, it is the sound of a spoken word, or the act of sounding the word as much as the meaning of the word that precipitates the listener’s enlightenment. In the famous *koan*, “Chao-chou’s Dog”, “A monk asked Chao-chou, “Has the dog Buddha nature or not?” Chao-chou said, “Mu” (Aitken 1990:7). The literal (and hidden) meaning of Chao-chou’s response, *mu*, is nothing at all. The meaning of the *koan* does not lie in the meaning of the word *mu*.

⁵⁴ This thesis is an exception. As author, I must consciously position myself within the western critical tradition of musicology during the act of writing.

In some cases the moment of insight is preceded by just sound, no words at all. Zen master Xiangyan Zhixian (香巖智閑, J. Kyôgen Chikan, ca. 9th C.) attained enlightenment upon hearing the sound of a pebble hitting a bamboo while sweeping the ground. Wumen Huikai (無門慧開, J. Mumon Ekai, 1183-1260) was awakened as he heard the sound of the drum that announced mealtimes. Hakuin Ekaku (白隠慧鶴, 1686-1769), was enlightened by the sound of the temple bell announcing dawn as he was meditating through a winter's night. One monk experienced awakening with the clattering of a tile breaking on the ground. The sound of *honkyoku* being played on a bamboo flute is the sound of enlightenment itself. It is in this context that the expression *ichion jôbutsu* is made in the *honkyoku* tradition.

Oral traditions have a special relationship to time because of their existence as sound. Oral traditions give time a further perspective in their tendency to merge the past with the present. They exist only in the present moment. The present moment therefore has a much greater importance. For example, epic tales are not thought of as strictly historical in perspective in the Western sense, and do not accurately preserve the past. Rather, the composer/performer creates a consciousness of the present in his performance, in part by continually including present relevances and discarding or modifying past irrelevancies. What has been received from the past is brought into the present moment. "The living memory preserves what is necessary for present life" (Havelock 1963:122).

The concept of time and sound as dealt with in the Zen tradition has been mentioned above. On the subject of time D.T. Suzuki writes:

In this spiritual world there are no time-divisions such as the past, present, and future; for they have contracted themselves into a single moment of the present where life quivers in its true sense. The conception of time as an objective blank in which particular events as its contents succeed one after another has completely been discarded....the past and the future are both rolled up in this present moment of illumination, and this present moment is not something standing still with all its contents, for it ceaselessly moves on. Thus the past is the present, so is the future, but this present in which the past and the future are merged never remains the present; in other words, it is eternally present.

(Suzuki D.T. 1970:76)

In the *honkyoku* tradition, the act of performing *honkyoku* unifies the illusionary divisions of the past, present, and future. At the instance of performing a single sound, the performer simultaneously hears what precedes the particular sound as well as what follows it. If the previous sounds and those that follow it are not within one's awareness while performing a sound, then that sound will not be performed as "absolute sound" or with "absolute timing" (see pp. [284-287](#)). The past and future become part of the perception of the present moment.

This does not mean that while performing *honkyoku* a player is preoccupied with what has been or will be performed, at the expense of the present performance (a trap that all *shakuhachi* players seem to encounter). With the performance of every note, there

is only that particular note, nothing else. Within that single note, past, present, and future merge into the “absolute now” of Dogen (see above).

An interesting difference between oral memory and “textual memory” noted by Ong (1982:67) is that unlike the latter, the former “has a high somatic component”. By this, Ong means bodily activity that accompanies vocalization, such as hand movements, swaying of the body, dancing, etc. A reason given by Ong for this “natural, even inevitable” behavior leads to yet another connection between Zen Buddhism, orality, and *honkyoku*. Ong states:

The oral word, as we have noted, never exists in a simply verbal context, as a written word does. Spoken words are always modifications of a total, existential situation, which always engages the body.

(Ong 1982:67)

The engagement of the “total, existential situation” is the goal of Zen Buddhism, and of *shakuhachi honkyoku* performance. The inability of words, especially written words to address the total existential situation is one of the primary reasons Zen Buddhism has always been wary of literature. The founder of Zen Buddhism in China, Bodhi-Dharma taught that Zen is:

A special transmission outside the
Scriptures;
No dependence upon words and letters;
Direct pointing to the soul of man;
Seeing into one’s nature and the attainment
of Buddhahood.

(Suzuki D.T. 1956:61)

This quote is quite emphatic in stating that awareness of the total, existential situation is not found in literature. Literature is by its very nature, linear rather than holistic. The linear time frame, the sense of traveling through points in a progressing history is enforced by the writing and reading of most literature.

This contrasts with the total situation, which defies the linear/literate mind set. Awareness of the interconnectedness of the whole is likened to knowing the Buddhist Net of Indra (a poetic description of the universe), an infinite net of jewels, each jewel reflecting every other jewel in the net. Compassion, one of the wellsprings of Buddhism, is born out of such awareness and actions based upon that awareness.

Playing *honkyoku* is an exercise in being aware of the total situation, in a way that neither notation nor a verbal nor a visual description can reproduce. It is a non-literate way of thinking. *Honkyoku* can only be experienced. The manner in which the first breath is taken before playing the initial phrase of a piece determines and is determined by how the final phrase of the piece is played, so interconnected are all of the breaths and phrases. Each phrase, note, timing, and minute articulation in *honkyoku* is affected by what precedes and follows it, by the physical, emotional and

mental state of the performer, the physical state of the *shakuhachi* instrument, the surroundings in which the performance is taking place, the audience if any, etc.

Awareness of all of these elements is essential in every *honkyoku* performance, and defies the linear/literate mentality mentioned above. Likewise, the state of one's being and mind at the moment of taking each breath also determines the nature of that breath. The realization of *honkyoku* is determined by all stimuli experienced by the performer, the listener, and the *shakuhachi* instrument itself. As will be seen in the analysis (Chapter 6), one of the ways this concept is manifested in performance is in the myriad variations in phrase length and number of total phrases that occur between performers.

Related to this is a statement of my first teacher, Sakai Chikuho II, that each performance of *honkyoku* is an event which is eternal and must be performed with the concentration, awareness and respect befitting that which is eternal. The playing of *honkyoku* forever resonates within and profoundly affects the performer and the listener, as well as those people and things that come in contact with the performer and listener, ever expanding in its influence upon the universe, to the degree that it becomes the universe.

5.2.1 Orality and Music

Besides the philosophical aspects of orality and how it relates to Zen Buddhism and *shakuhachi honkyoku*, the theoretical statements derived from the study of orality and music in general can be studied profitably as an avenue toward the understanding of *honkyoku*. Not surprisingly, a primary instance of music as an oral tradition is another music tradition of a primarily religious nature, Gregorian chants. Studies of Gregorian chant within the context of orality, notably by Treitler (1974, 1975) and Cutter (1976), are particularly pertinent to the study of *honkyoku*.

There are a number of similarities between Gregorian chants and *honkyoku* besides their probable oral origins. This can be seen in part by examining the role of Gregory. To an extent, Gregory is mythical insofar as he is more than his "historical" component. The myths associated with this figure play an important role in the way in which the music has been viewed through the centuries, in particular, in disguising its probable origins as an oral tradition.

For example, Gregory is traditionally credited with having invented or created Gregorian Chant despite modern scholars believing otherwise. As such, he has been considered, at the very least, a legendary genius and has even been thought of as a recipient of direct inspiration and aid from God. Gregory especially has been thought of as having been personally helped by God in his creative endeavors. Similar observations can be made about Homer, the traditional creator of another oral tradition, the epic tales of the Iliad and the Odyssey (Treitler 1974:334-344).

There are a number of prominent figures in the *honkyoku* tradition that act in a similar fashion to Homer and Gregory. The prime example is Hotto Kokushi. Like Gregory, Hotto was an historical person, a famous Buddhist priest of the thirteenth century. But

the legends of Hotto's role in creating the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition in Japan, discussed in Chapter 3 (p.114) are of mythical proportions. Furthermore, as with the case of Gregorian Chant, the act of creating the earliest and most revered *honkyoku*, the three pieces known as "*Sankyorei*", also featured divine intervention (see p.234). More recently, there are numerous legends and larger than life tales surrounding the "originator" of the Watazumi lineage of *honkyoku*, the inimitable Watazumi *dôso*, who himself claimed to have had no teacher.

More important than the similarities between the semi-legendary "originators" of the traditions and lineages mentioned above are the traits shared by all orally transmitted poetry and music. As briefly discussed above, this is due to the nature of human memory. Use of memory in transmitting music is treated by Treitler, first by describing a possibly typical view of the process of memory. He asks:

Is performance without scores tantamount to performance from memory? As our scholarly habits have been conditioned by the study of texts, our recourse in their absence has been the concept of memory as a medium of storage comparable to a score: things are committed to memory whole, and there they lie fixed and lifeless until they are retrieved whole. We say that the singer has memorized a melody as though we might be saying that he had swallowed a score.

(Treitler 1975:344)

This "unrealistic view of the process of remembering" is contrasted to the view taken by modern psychology. Quoting from Frederic C. Bartlett's classic *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology* (Cambridge, England, 1932; paperback reprint 1972), Treitler outlines ten features of memory that are pertinent to oral transmission, including that of *shakuhachi honkyoku* (Treitler 1975:344-345). As these features are particularly useful in understanding the transmission process of *honkyoku*, they are quoted in full below:

1. The theory of remembering depends on the theory of perception, for the way we recall experiences depends on how we grasp them in the first place.
2. Perceiving is not passive reception; it is active organizing. We strive to assimilate newly presented material into the setting of patterns and left from the encounter with past experience. But that always results in the reorganization of those patterns. Thus perceiving, and indeed conscious life in general, is a continual process of adjusting our own records of our past.
3. In perceiving we draw out certain salient features of the matter presented that are for us especially prominent. These serve as signposts for the process of assimilating and reorganizing.
4. Those signposts play a central role in remembering. As perceiving is not simply a matter of the reception of stimuli, so remembering is not simply the storage of stimuli strung together and their later reproduction. Rather it is an active process of grouping appropriate details about such salient features. It is a process of construction, not reproduction.

5. In remembering, therefore, we activate and reorganize the patterns of past experience. This has two important corollaries: (a) each recall is based, not on some fixed model outside ourselves, but on our own assimilated version of the matter recalled—not on the “original” but on our most recent rendering; and (b) recall must be in conformity with the existing schemata in which our mind is organized. What does not conform will tend to be corrected or eliminated.

6. The latter tendency, together with the role of persistent detail in remembering, leads to stereotyped forms. This is especially important in the conventionalization of the forms of cultural expression.

7. In the recall of narratives, beginnings and ends especially provide those standout, persistent features that serve as the focal points of the reconstruction. Consequently it is beginnings and ends that tend to become most stereotyped in repeated recall.

8. Form, as well as salient detail, is persistent and is therefore an important factor in what makes remembering possible.

9. A salient detail may be common to two or more themes or streams of interest, and it may serve as a crossing point between them. In that way the theme originally presented may be left and another entered.

10. Remembering and imaginative construction are on a single continuum. They differ from one another in degree, but not in kind.

(Treitler 1974:344-345)

The oral composition theory is so compatible with the theory of memory that the former may be thought of as a special case of the latter (Treitler 1974:395). The above features of memory can be used to explain much of the construction of *honkyoku*, as will be demonstrated in the analysis of “*Reibo*” (see Chapter 6). The musical formula is a salient feature or signpost used by composers/performers in oral music traditions. In the case of “*Reibo*”, one musical formula is so important in the *honkyoku* tradition as to be given the name, *reibo no te* (鈴慕の手, ‘*Reibo*’ fingering). This salient feature, as well as other features such as cadential formulae and beginnings and endings of formal divisions, operates in performances of “*Reibo*” in a manner consistent with the oral composition.

In orally composed/transmitted music, formulaic material becomes the notes, phrases, motives, or other salient features of the pieces in question. In order to understand a type of music of this kind, this formulaic material must be defined and recognized. Though the identifying, listing and cataloguing of possible formula is necessary, it is only a first step in analyzing a piece of music. More importantly, the system regulating the use of the formula must also be identified (Treitler 1974:356). For example, according to the theories of memory, the formulaic material should be more prevalent at the beginning of the piece (melody, section, etc.), should occur less frequently as the piece progresses, and more frequently as the piece nears its conclusion (Treitler 1975:9).

In Gregorian chants, the “formulaic system”, according to Treitler (1974:359), “is a construct, a way of referring to the singer’s assimilated sense of the pattern of a melodic phrase as that can be inferred from the study of numerous instances of phrases like it”.

Treitler argues that features in Gregorian Chant, such as recurring melodic patterns or formulae, can best be understood in the light of theories of orality. He gives as examples the musical transcriptions in Figure 6 (p.435) (Treitler 1974:358). The upper staff represents an abstract realization of what Treitler calls “the formulaic system”, features shared by every phrase in the particular position. The other staves show the recurrent formulae, identified with horizontal brackets (1974:357-358). For example, the formula identified as #1 consists of the notes D, C, and A. The formulaic system allows a beginning in either direction through the frame, but eventually the movement is downward.

Another study of orally transmitted music is the analysis by Seeger (1977) of approximately three hundred variants of the predominately orally transmitted American ballad “Barbara Allen”. The analysis showed that the lack of a score “not only encourages but enforces variance of performance” (Seeger 1977:275). It was found that one of the most useful and generally agreed upon of all criteria used to classify the variants was phrase endings (Seeger 1977:308), a conclusion predicted by orality theories. Seeger (1977:278) also observes that “what is sung and the singing of it are not, musically speaking, two things, but one”, and the abstraction of the song from its singing, which is what the written score does, leads to distortion.

The identification of formulaic material in *shakuhachi honkyoku*, using data from scores of traditional *shakuhachi honkyoku* notation and transcriptions of *honkyoku* performances, and the system by which that material may be organized will be the topic of Chapter 6 (pp.304-418). The following section examines *honkyoku* as an oral tradition in more general terms, and presents issues related to orality that are specific to the tradition.

5.2.2 Orality and the Transmission of *Shakuhachi Honkyoku*

The question of orality has never been examined in studies of *honkyoku*, by either Japanese or non-Japanese scholars. One might ask how instrumental music can be “oral”, as nothing is sung or spoken as in Gregorian chant or oral epic tales. The terms “non-notated” or perhaps “aural” would be more appropriate in the case of instrumental music that is transmitted primarily without recourse to written notation. Nettl (1983:187) points out that “aural” emphasizes that people learn what they hear, not what is spoken to them. This differentiation becomes even more meaningful in the light of the features of memory listed above. Nonetheless, the term “oral” will be used in this discussion of *honkyoku* for two reasons.

First of all, the issue of transmission remains basically the same whether the music is an “oral” or “aural” one, or even whether the tradition is a verbal or musical one. Secondly, there are “oral” aspects to *honkyoku*. For example, in the course of transmitting *honkyoku* to a student the teacher does utilize the spoken word during a

lesson, however briefly. The verbal discussion of the pieces by the traditional *shakuhachi* teacher may not be as elaborate or technical as would occur during the lessons of typically western instruments. Nonetheless, the teacher does not remain totally silent, if only to tell the student that his rendition of the piece is still unacceptable.

It is common knowledge that the *shakuhachi koten honkyoku* tradition is basically an oral one, even among most of the lineages that use notation in the transmission of the pieces. Not only is it recognized that the pieces were originally created, performed, and transmitted orally, but many believe that the *honkyoku* must always remain fundamentally oral in character, even if scores are used as mnemonic devices. In a meeting or seminar on the Fuke *shakuhachi* held in Tôkyô in 1938, noted *honkyoku* player Uramoto Setchô explained, “In the Fuke sect, notation is really just a memory aid. It does not have an important function. Much [of the Fuke tradition] does not have notation at all, being an oral tradition. When notation is used, it is impossible not to acquire the limits of that notation. One ends up playing the notation, and not playing the true *shakuhachi*” (Inagaki, ed. 1985:47).

A quite different example of orality in the transmission process of *honkyoku* is called in the Chikuho *ryû* tradition *hyôshi* (拍子, literally ‘the beat’). The teacher frequently sings, or asks the student to sing one or more phrases as an aid to learning them. The vocalization of *shakuhachi honkyoku* is somewhat similar to the practice *shôga* (唱歌) in other Japanese music traditions. Even though notation is used, it is believed that if a student can sing a phrase, he is more likely to really know the phrase, and thus be able to play it on his *shakuhachi*.

The *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition is largely an oral one even though notation of the pieces have existed at least for one hundred and fifty years. In the description of a typical *shakuhachi* lesson presented above could be seen the diminished role of the written score, as well as the repetitive nature of transmission of the music from teacher to student. Studies of present-day non-literate traditions and of material believed to be written versions of what was originally oral material, such as those of the Homeric and Gregorian traditions, suggest two possible aspects of the *honkyoku* tradition worthy of consideration. The first of these two aspects might be the characteristics of the *honkyoku* that suggest a basic oral tradition, through the transcriptions of contemporary performances. Secondly, written notation of *honkyoku* could be analyzed for any oral residue suggesting an originally oral tradition.

Although the analyses of both transcriptions of recorded performances and transnotations of traditional scores are the subject of a number of studies of *honkyoku*, and, in fact, constitute a major portion of this thesis, problems nonetheless arise with the division of the examination into these two aspects. Transcriptions of recorded performances are at best imperfect records of a finished product, the end result of the act of performing a piece. The act or process of performing that piece is only indirectly and incompletely inferred by the recording and even less so by the transcription. Transcriptions of the notation may show more of the process of performing than do the recording or the transcription thereof, because of numerous written and symbolized instructions to the performer in the score.

In fact, the *shakuhachi* student today almost always relies on the notation to a certain degree when learning *honkyoku*. The notation, however, is not a complete written representation of *honkyoku* performance. The notation, a mnemonic outline of the actual performance, is not “all the music”. Though analysis of the notation does in fact indicate “oral residue”, as well as a number of other conclusions about the music (see pp.[241-244](#)), it can only go so far in describing the process of performing *honkyoku*.

It has been shown elsewhere (Lee 1991:18-35) that notations of *shakuhachi honkyoku* may differ from their realizations in ways which can be divided into at least four categories: notation symbols that are given new meanings; symbols that are ignored; instances where pitch, duration or playing techniques are not notated; and inconsistent interpretation of symbols. The transnotation of traditional scores of *shakuhachi honkyoku* into staff notation cannot indicate these discrepancies between notation and performance.

The usual method of study of a living music tradition, that is, the analysis of transcriptions of recordings of actual performances, also presents problems. The sound product of *honkyoku* performance, that which can be captured on recordings, is not considered a complete representation of what *honkyoku* is to the performer. There is more to *honkyoku* than the music. For example, it is extremely common in the *honkyoku* for alternative fingerings to be specified, either by the notation or by oral instructions from the teacher. These alternative fingerings frequently produce subtle changes in timbre, but often do not make noticeable changes in the sound product at all. In other words, the listener is not aware of these alternative fingerings, only the performer knows of them. The act or process of performing *honkyoku* is more important than the audible product. The transmission of these non-sounded processes may or may not be notated in the score. In any case, it may be that the formulaic system underlying the composition and performance of *honkyoku* may contain these non-sounded processes.

Because of the above considerations, the validity of any study of *koten shakuhachi honkyoku* in terms of theories of orality may be related to the degree that the author of the study has experienced the process of performing *honkyoku*. In other words, the more the researcher has played *honkyoku* the better chance of his having a knowledge of the features of *honkyoku* that are oral in nature, particularly those features that are part of the process of performing, but which do not affect the sound product. The relationship between the musicologist’s experience in performing *honkyoku* and his success in transcribing and analyzing *honkyoku* performances will be demonstrated in the analysis of “*Reibo*” (Chapter 6). This is particularly evident in the lining up of transcriptions of a number of performances of a *honkyoku* in order to facilitate comparison, and when dealing with the minute details of performance (see pp.[358-370](#) and [389-393](#)).

An analysis of *honkyoku* as an oral tradition must also address what may be termed as status-determined levels of orality. The frequency and/or acceptability of change in *honkyoku* increases proportionately to the ability and/or status of the performer. For example, acceptable deviation from a *honkyoku* score differs if the performer is an *iemoto*, a high ranking teacher, an advanced student, or a beginner. Change is severely limited at the level of the beginner. More fundamental changes occur at the advanced

level. The performer's reputation/status also determines the degree to which a change is considered a mistake or "creative licence". An early task of any analysis must be to determine if such changes fit in the scheme of oral performance.

The possibility of status-determined levels of orality working in the transmission of *honkyoku* have bearings on past studies and analyses of *honkyoku*. If previous analyses of *honkyoku* fail to adequately describe how *honkyoku* work, could one reason be due to a disregard by the authors of those analyses of the above levels of orality? Were the persons analyzing the pieces working only with data derived at the beginner's level, therefore, making the changes less apparent? This would likely be the case if the researcher was using data derived from his lessons with his teacher, regardless of the teacher's rank. Some of the researchers (eg., Gutzwiller) later became advanced students, but were, at best, advanced beginners when they did their research (eg., Keeling, Weisgarber, Berger). There are also studies that have been authored by people who are not *shakuhachi honkyoku* performers (eg., Tukitani, Malm).

The difficulty for relatively non-advanced students of *shakuhachi* who attempt to author studies of the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition is compounded by some of the non-musical, philosophical aspects of the *honkyoku* performing tradition. Furthermore, these philosophical considerations in some respects reinforce the orality of the tradition. For example, the commonly held ideal of *honkyoku* as *honnin no kyoku* (本人の曲, 'the person in question's piece') (see pp.255, 267) is that each *honkyoku* must become totally, in every way perceived and unperceived, the piece of each individual performer. Until the piece is truly "one's very own", it is impossible for one really to be able to play the piece.⁵⁵

The process of any *honkyoku* becoming the performer's piece may (or may not) include changes in the piece. These changes may range from nearly imperceptible subtleties, such as the timing of breaths between certain phrases, to gross changes, such as the inclusion or omission of entire phrases (Lee 1986:147). Furthermore, the idea of *honnin no kyoku* contains the probability of change with each performance, even after the piece is "one's own". Every performance of *honkyoku* is the manifestation of the entire situation or condition of the performer including the universe of which he is totally a part.

It could also be asked where the "performer" ends and the "universe" of which he is a part begins. For example, the simple answer, "At his skin", does not suffice, if only because both the air being breathed in and out to play the *honkyoku*, and the sound entering his ears while performing transcend that barrier, which if perceived at the atomic level is no barrier at all.

Because a single condition of any given performance cannot be the same any more than any point in time can repeat itself, each performance must be unique. In this context, Nakatsuka (1979:376) writes: "Therefore, the piece '*Renbo*' is not

⁵⁵ For more on *honnin no kyoku*, see pp.255,267. Also see Toya (1984:101) and Uramoto (in Inagaki, ed. 1985:198).

necessarily the piece ‘*Renbo*’; ‘*Kokû*’ and ‘*Kyorei*’ are not necessarily ‘*Kokû*’ and ‘*Kyorei*’....Today’s piece is not tomorrow’s piece”. In the context of the philosophy expressed by *honnin no kyoku*, all performances of *honkyoku* are authentic if they are performed as “one’s own”, regardless of the abundance or lack of change that occurs between individual performances. The concept of *honnin no kyoku* is one possible explanation for the tremendous amount of variation occurring in *honkyoku*. This will be dealt with in the analysis (Chapter 6).

The concept of *honnin no kyoku* and the uniqueness of each performance are manifestations of an oral tradition. The oral poet and musician create anew with each performance. The performance is unique to all other performances, even in cases where this is not recognized by the performer (Lord 1964:101). Each performance is infused with the individuality of the oral performer and the uniqueness of the moment of performance, regardless of the strength and depth of the characteristics which the poetry or music has developed over centuries of performance. Likewise, in all oral traditions, today’s performance can never be the same as tomorrow’s performance.

5.2.3 Dreams

An important element of many, if not most oral traditions is the function and status dreams are given by the members of the traditions. This was touched upon in reference to the legendary descriptions of the transmission of both the Gregorian chants and *honkyoku* through the human intermediaries, Gregory and Hotto Kakushin (p.114). The notion of dreams is important to the *honkyoku* tradition not only in the context of its orality, but also in the light of its spiritual background as well.

In Taoist and Zen Buddhist teachings, a valid part of the total existential experience, discussed above, is dreams. Far from being illusionary compared with waking experiences, dreams are considered as “real” as any reality. Taoist Zhuangzi (莊子, ca.4thC BC.) wrote the now famous story of a man he called Zhuang Zhou (莊周), who was Zhuangzi himself. The story is about Zhuang Zhou dreaming that he is a butterfly, happily fluttering about, unaware that he is Zhuang Zhou. He then woke up, Zhuang Zhou again. But he did not know if he was Zhuang Zhou who had dreamt of being a butterfly or in fact a butterfly who was now dreaming that he was Zhuang Zhou. Zhuangzi also wrote:

Someday there will be a great awakening when we know that this is all a great dream. Yet the stupid believe they are awake, busily and brightly assuming they understand things, calling this man ruler, that one herdsman—how dense!⁵⁶ Confucius and you are both dreaming! And when I say you are dreaming, I am dreaming too! Words like these will be labeled the Supreme Swindle.

⁵⁶ According to Aitken, this is part of an attack on Confucius, who separated people by classes.

It is not surprising to find that dreams are an important feature in the *honkyoku* tradition, particularly in the creation of *honkyoku*. The *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition shares with a number of other oral traditions the manner in which at least some pieces are believed to have been created. Pieces are not composed, but given or taught to a person by spirits or gods, frequently in a dream. The person receiving the piece is not the composer, but rather the transmitter or conduit of the piece to the rest of the people. This characteristic is a major difference between many oral music traditions and literate music traditions. In most literate societies, especially in the West, the notion is that music is usually composed by a “composer”, who single-handedly creates the music. The composer may utilize some sort of inspiration in the process of composing, e.g., from God or Nature, but nonetheless still expects and is given full credit for composing or creating the piece.

In a number of oral music traditions, many songs or pieces are not thought of as being composed in this manner. For example, in the Northern Australian Aboriginal song tradition, instead of a piece being created through the efforts of a “composer”, the piece is “found” by the “song-man” (Moyle, in Marett 1988:1). This implies that the piece already exists before the singer finds it. The finding of a piece frequently occurs in a dream, and often the song-man is given the piece by a supernatural being or the spirit of a deceased or mythical composer. In Melanesia, songs are also believed to originate in dreams (Marett 1988:1). The West has a similar tradition in Gregorian Chant, which Treitler (1974, 1975, 1986) has shown to have originally been an oral tradition. A number of illustrations in the ninth and tenth centuries depict the legend of Gregory being given the plainchant directly by God, who dictates the music to him in the form of a dove perched on his shoulder (Treitler 1974:335-336,339). Another example is the Shona mbira player of Zimbabwe, who learns new pieces through dreams with the assistance of spirits. The “new” pieces are thought to be actually ancient pieces belonging to the ancestral spirits who are teaching him (Berliner 1981:86).

In all of these examples, the “composer” is thought of as the medium or conduit through which the revelation of the piece is made available to all people. He/she may be honoured as such, but not as the actual creator of the piece. The music does not belong to the composer, because it existed before it was manifested. The composer is not the creator because the music is not created. The mbira pieces existed in the spirit world even before the mbira instrument appeared amongst the Shona people, one player explaining that “the mbira pieces first belonged to the spirits, who later taught them to the people” (Berliner 1981:87). An Aboriginal singer, in his story of how he received a new song, explained, “Well, Balanjirri⁵⁷ and that dijeridu player⁵⁸ showed me that song.... It was Balanjirri who made me know” (Marett 1988:5). A similar implication is made by the legend of Gregory, in this case, the Christian God in the form of a dove making known the plainchant to Gregory.

The *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition is also an example of a music tradition in which the origin of at least some pieces is traced to a time when they were given to a chosen

⁵⁷ Balanjirri is the spirit of a long-dead song-man (Marett 1988:7).

⁵⁸ The dijeridu player accompanied Balanjirri, his brother (Marett 1987:2).

member of the tradition during a dream. The *Kyotaku denki*, the most important legend within the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition (see pp.37-39), describes how two of the three most revered *koten honkyoku* pieces, “*Mukaiji*” and “*Kokû*” or “*Kokûji*”⁵⁹ were “received” in a dream. Kakushin (or Gakushin, 學心, posthumously known as Hotto Kokushi, d.1298) is the priest credited in the *Kyotaku* legend with bringing the *suizen* tradition to Japan from China in the 12th century (see p.114). Kakushin had four main students in Japan, who were collectively known as the “Four Devout Men” (四居士, *shikoji*). One of Kakushin’s four students was named Kichiku (寄竹).⁶⁰

Later, having a desire to practice itinerancy, Kichiku asked the master for permission to take his leave. He wished to play this flute in the streets and at every gate, and to let all the world know this exquisite music. Gakushin said, “Well! What a fine ambition!” Kichiku departed Kishû (紀州)⁶¹ immediately and before long arrived at the shrine of *Kokûzô-dô* (虚空蔵堂), at the top of Asamagatake (朝熊嶽, Mt. Asama)⁶² in the province of Sei-shû (勢州, present-day Mie prefecture). [Having confined himself in the shrine], Kichiku concentrated strenuously on his devotions, praying deep into the night.⁶³ When he was about to fall asleep, he had a vivid inspired dream: Kichiku was poling a punt, alone on the sea, admiring the full moon. Suddenly a dense fog covered everything and the moonlight, too, grew dim and dark. Through the fog, he heard the sound of a flute, desolate and sonorous. The beauty of the sound was beyond description. Shortly the sound ceased. The fog got thicker and thicker and became a dense mass, from which the wonderful sound of the flute emerged [again]. Kichiku had never heard such an exquisite sound.

In his dream he was deeply inspired and wished to imitate the sound with his *kyotaku* [*shakuhachi*]. Then suddenly he awakened from the dream, and found no trace of the mass of fog or the punt and pole; but the sound of the flute still lingered in his ears.

Kichiku thought it very wondrous. Tuning his *kyotaku* he tried to imitate with it the two strains of music in the dream. Eventually he succeeded in reproducing the sound on his flute.

⁵⁹ The third piece is known today as “*Kyorei*”, but was originally known as “*Kyotaku*” (Yamamoto 1795). It is said to have been composed in the ninth century by Zhâng Bô (張伯, J. Chôhaku), the legendary follower of Fuke Zenji and first practitioner of *suizen* or ‘Blowing Zen’.

⁶⁰ Yamamoto, the commentator of the *Kyotaku denki* noted that “Kichiku is the same person who is later called Master Kyochiku (虚竹). He was said to be a man of high virtue” (Tsuge 1977:54). Kyochiku is credited with founding the temple, Myôanji in Kyôto.

⁶¹ Present-day Wakayama prefecture, where Gakushin had earlier founded his temple, Saihōji (西方寺).

⁶² Sanford (1977:430) incorrectly reads this important mountain in *shakuhachi* legends as Asakuma.

⁶³ The original Japanese is *gokô* (五更), the hour between 2 and 3 A.M. (Tsuge 1977:54).

He immediately returned to Kishû and told Gakushin, his master, about the dream and the music he learned from it. Then Kichiku asked the master to name the two pieces. The master said, “That must be a gift from the Buddha! What you heard first shall be called “*Mukaiji*” [‘Flute in the Misty Sea’], and what you heard next shall be named “*Kokûji*” [‘Flute in the Empty Sky’].”

Thenceforth, as he went to and fro on the road, Kichiku played “*Kyotaku*” (the piece) which he learned first; and when he was requested to perform something novel, he played the two newly acquired pieces.

trans. Tsuge 1977:51

As mentioned above, the notion of receiving a piece or song in a dream is common throughout oral music traditions. It is interesting to note that in the above description, Kichiku has his vision or dream not while in deep sleep, but just as he is about to go to sleep. The Chinese character used in the original text is 夢, read in Japanese as *yume* and generally translated into English as dream or vision. In the original text, the above character is combined with the character 靈 (*rei*, ‘soul, spirit’), to form the word *reimu* (靈夢), which is translated as ‘divine revelation’ or ‘prophetic vision’ (Nelson 1974:947). Kichiku was therefore neither awake nor asleep when he was given the two pieces in an “inspired dream” or a “divine revelation”.⁶⁴

In the context of Taoism and Zen Buddhism, there is fundamentally no distinction between the “dichotomies” of the waking and dreaming state. Amongst cultures or traditions more oral than literate in character, transmission of important elements of the tradition frequently occur during the dream state. In the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition, the pieces “*Kokû*” and “*Mukaiji*” were gifts received in dreams. They were not composed or created. The *shakuhachi* player who performs them is dreaming them as well.

Much of what Zen Buddhism in general and the *honkyoku* tradition in particular attempts to transmit can be understood in the context of western theoretical thought on transmission, and especially on orality. Both Zen Buddhism and the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition incorporate, however, literature or notation in their transmission. Having discussed the issue of orality and the *honkyoku*, I can now turn to the subject of notation and transmission. The following section examines the relationship between documents and performance in the *honkyoku* tradition, and as viewed from a Japanese position and from a western theoretical one.

5.3 Documents and Performance

Associated with the issues of orality and the *shakuhachi honkyoku* presented above is the relationship between documents and performance. Though *shakuhachi honkyoku*

⁶⁴ See Marett (1987) for an illuminating discussion of the Zen treatment of dream state/wake state and of illusion/reality, in the context of an Aboriginal singer who was given a song both while asleep and awake.

remain predominately an oral tradition, notation has been in use for just over 150 years (Lee 1991:19) and is now very much a part of the tradition. Examination of the relationship and interaction between notations and performances can help illuminate the question of what is being transmitted in the *honkyoku* tradition.

In the *shakuhachi koten honkyoku* tradition, not only is it recognized that the pieces were originally created, performed, and transmitted orally, but many believe that *honkyoku* must always remain fundamentally oral in character. Even when scores are used, they function primarily as mnemonic devices. In a seminar on the Fuke *shakuhachi* held in Tōkyō in 1938, noted *honkyoku* player Uramoto Setchō⁶⁵ explained, “In the Fuke sect, notation is really just a memory aid. It does not have an important function. Much [of the Fuke tradition] does not have notation at all, being an oral tradition. When notation is used, it is impossible not to adopt the limitations of that notation. One ends up playing the notation, and not playing true *shakuhachi*” (Uramoto, quoted in Inagaki 1985:47).

Brief mention has already been made of what seems at first glance to be the rejection of both verbal language and written scriptures in the Zen Buddhist tradition, including the famous quote by Bodhi-Dharma stating that the Zen tradition is “a special transmission outside the scriptures” (Suzuki D.T. 1956:61). Other references, which similarly assert that words are the “Supreme Swindle” (see quote by Zhuangzi above, p.231), abound in Taoist and Zen literature. Hisamatsu, the noted *shakuhachi* player of the mid 19th century, wrote, “Profound sayings are nothing but many words and false sounds” (Kurihara 1918:219).

Yet even Hisamatsu used words (and notations). Dōgen, Zen master of 12th century Japan, even conceived of linguistic activity as the ultimate spiritual freedom demanded by the Buddha-dharma (Kim 1985:56). Aitken (1978:127) helps us understand Dōgen’s position by pointing out that we must use words. The question is how. Aitken’s answer is:

By playing with them, as [Bashō and Chuang-tsu] both did, and as did...countless other Zen teachers.

(Aitken 1978:127).

Hisamatsu gives another perspective to the use of notation in the *honkyoku* tradition in his *Hitori Mondō* (an essay written in a question and answer format): “Question: Is one who can play every piece without differing from the notation a skilful player? Answer: Not at all. Someone who plays pieces without deviating may have a good memory, but that is not enough for a skillful player” (Kurihara 1918:213). Notation is thus not rejected in itself. Problems occur only when it is thought to be in itself the essence of the matter.

⁶⁵ Uramoto is one of the six *honkyoku* players, whose recorded performance is transcribed and analyzed in Chapter 6.

In the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition, notation is widely used as a memory aid both while learning a piece and while trying to remember a piece one has already studied. Mnemonic devices have no inherent authority. They are symbols or signals that jog one's memory of what is already internalized. If the performer does not know the *honkyoku*, if *honkyoku* is not already "inside" the performer, then the symbols of the notation are of little help. On the other hand, if the performer is truly intimate with the *honkyoku*, he can use the notation by "playing" with it as the haiku poet Bashô and others do with words. For such a performer, the symbols of the notation become "bearers of ultimate truth", just as words were to Dôgen (Kim 1985:58).

I have described in detail elsewhere (1991:18-35) how transcriptions (into staff notation) of performances of *honkyoku* contrast with transnotations (also into staff notation) of the traditional notation of the piece performed. Briefly, discrepancies between *honkyoku* notation and performance occur frequently and may be classified into four categories:

1. Instances where symbols are consistently given new meanings, which are, however, different from their standard meanings. The consistency of these new meanings may apply in a single piece only, or throughout the *honkyoku* repertoire of a particular lineage.
2. Instances where symbols are totally ignored.
3. Instances where a pitch, duration or playing technique is performed, but is not notated in the score.
4. Instances where meanings for symbols are inconsistent. For example, a symbol may have the standard meaning in one phrase, but be given one or more different meanings in other phrases.

(Lee 1991:27, 32)

In the light of the above, it is easy to understand that even if one knows the standard meanings of all of the symbols used in a *honkyoku* notation, one usually will not be able to perform *honkyoku* properly. A realization of a score of a *honkyoku* using only the standard indications of the symbols might be so far removed from the actual *honkyoku* as to be considered a different piece. The closer the adherence to the literal meaning of the symbols, the farther away *honkyoku* becomes. If one performs *honkyoku* with limited knowledge of the piece as well as the symbols of the notation, as would be the case of a beginner just starting to play with his teacher, then the realization of the notation would only be marginally nearer to *honkyoku*.

One who has studied a piece so as not to need notation at all may be able to play *honkyoku*, but the performance of one who has internalized all of the formulaic embellishments and playing techniques idiomatic of the lineage to which the piece belongs, has frequently performed other pieces related to it, and has also performed the piece (without notation) countless times over many years is the closest of all to the *honkyoku*. The more intimate one is with the *honkyoku*, the less reliant one is upon notation. One could even argue that the best notation for *honkyoku* is the least

notation. Only when there is no reliance upon the notation, does it no longer limit the performer and *honkyoku*.

In my opinion, a major reason notation, especially published, copyrighted notation, for *shakuhachi honkyoku* exists at all is because of its bureaucratic function of asserting and maintaining authority rather than any function it might have in the transmitting and performing of *honkyoku*. The same can be said of *shakuhachi* organizations in general, as pointed out in the discussion of the history of *shakuhachi* (see chapter three, p.159).

When a *shakuhachi* player breaks away from his teacher's sect or school and forms a new organization, one of the ways he can assert his new authority is to publish scores in his own notation. An interesting twist to this procedure of gaining authority by creating and publishing scores of new notation, and an example of the role of authority notation plays, can be seen in the case of Chikuho *ryû*. During his tenure as *iemoto* or head of Chikuho *ryû*, Sakai Chikuho II transcribed the *honkyoku* notation of his teacher, Jin, into the notation of his own sect. After Chikuho II retired due to illness in 1985, the new *iemoto*, Chikuho II's younger brother, Shôdô, refused to use many of the scores transcribed by Chikuho II. Instead, Shôdô reverted back to using Jin's original scores even though they are not in Chikuho notation. Shôdô asserted that Chikuho's scores were not faithful to the way Jin played the pieces, partly because Chikuho put too many of his own idiosyncrasies into them.⁶⁶

The relationship between the realization of a piece in performance and its notation is more complex than the one we have just been describing, whereby notation is used only to help the performer to remember a piece that already has been learned orally. It is likely that there has also been a dynamic interaction between the orally transmitted *honkyoku* and the written score.

An example of this type of dynamic interaction between literacy and orality has been presented by Butler⁶⁷ in his examination of early texts of the *Heike monogatari* (平家物語, 'The Tale of the Heike'). The *Heike monogatari* is a medieval epic tale describing the rapid rise during the latter 12th century of the Taira (平) clan, also known in Sino Japanese as the Heike, and the clan's equally rapid and remarkable demise at the hands of the Minamoto (源) clan (the Genji 源氏 in Sino Japanese) during what became known as the Gempei (源平) wars. There are sufficient parallels between the written and the oral in the *Heike monogatari* tradition and in the *honkyoku* tradition to warrant consideration.

According to Butler, the *Heike monogatari* may have originated in part from performances, two to three hours in length, by *biwa*-playing bards (*biwa hôshi*

⁶⁶ See Lee (1986:83-87) for further background on the manner in which Shôdô became *iemoto* of the sect.

⁶⁷ For the material on the *Heike monogatari* presented below, I am relying upon the work of Kenneth D. Butler (1966a:5-51, 1966b:37-54, 1969:93-108), in particular his research on the *Rokudai gozen monogatari* (六代御前物語) text, the Yukinaga (行長) text, and the Kakuichi (覺一) text.

琵琶法師)⁶⁸ describing various battles and episodes of the rise and fall of the Heike clan in the early 13th century. The extant transcriptions of one relatively short oral tale, the *Rokudai gozen monogatari*, tells of young Rokudai Gozen, the last surviving member of the Heike clan. This historical transcription is used by Butler as a starting point from which to trace the development of the *Heike monogatari* in terms of orality.

Butler's hypothesizes that the first written version of the *Heike monogatari* is the *Shibu kassenjô daisamban tōjō Heike monogatari* (四部合戦状第三番闘諍平家物語) manuscript, completed in the years 1218 to 1221, thirty-five years after the end of the Gempei wars, by a middle-ranking member of Kyōto's aristocracy, a lay priest named Yukinaga. In addition to historical literacy data to which his social and hereditary positions gave him access, Yukinaga used miscellaneous oral tales in circulation at the time to create one continuous story.

Butler (1966b:45) states that the oral origins of much of Yukinaga's work can be best seen in his book twelve which deals with the same subject matter as the *Rokudai* transcription. Yukinaga's Book Twelve exhibits many characteristics, such as oral language formulae and themes, which are found in transcription of an oral tale. In fact, according to Butler, approximately fifty percent of Yukinaga's work can be shown to be based on material from similar Buddhist oral tales and oral battle tales which had been in circulation during the several decades between the actual events and Yukinaga's time.

The *Shibu kassenjō* text is not, however, an oral composition, despite Yukinaga's dependence upon oral tales of his time. Up to fifty percent of Yukinaga's work incorporates source material from written historical records of the period. Furthermore, his composition is written almost exclusively in *kanbun* (漢文), a Chinese form of writing which is totally inappropriate for oral presentation due to a word order largely the reverse of colloquial Japanese (Butler 1966b:46). Even the sections clearly based on transcriptions of oral tales, such as the *Rokudai gozen monogatari*, are written in an unmistakably literary style. Yukinaga's *Shibu kassenjō*, although based on oral tales is a product of a literate mind.

While Yukinaga's usage of oral tales in creating a literary work is not unique in the history of world literature, evolution of the *Heike monogatari* from that point on is unparalleled. According to Butler, Yukinaga's literary work, itself part oral and part literary, was subsequently reintroduced into oral tradition. The oral poets after Yukinaga began using Yukinaga's writings as an aid in creating versions of the tale which were longer or more complete than what they had previously performed. Texts of the *Heike monogatari* dating from the middle of the 13th century until the latter 14th century indicate that over a number of generations these poets reintroduced many of the original oral tale's oral characteristics which had been eliminated by Yukinaga, and added other characteristics as well. The final result was the "perfected" or standard version of the *Heike monogatari*, the transcription finished in 1371 of a performance or performances by the oral poet Kakuichi. The Kakuichi text exhibits all the characteristics of an orally composed and performed work. With this dictation of Kakuichi's oral performance, the *Heike monogatari* became yet again a literary

⁶⁸ See p.48.

work. After Kakuichi's death, the written text of his oral performance became the guide for most of the oral poets to follow him. Numerous versions of the *Heike monogatari* were written after Kakuichi's time, but almost all were minor revisions of the standard Kakuichi text.

Many of Butler's conclusions about the back and forth movement of the *Heike monogatari* from oral to written are based largely upon a comparison of a text known to be a transcription of an oral composition, the *Rokudai gozen monogatari*, with other texts. Unfortunately such an historical transcription of a *shakuhachi honkyoku* performance of, for example, the previous century or earlier, in contrast to a historical score, does not exist. Though it remains to be seen what, if any, conclusions can be drawn from an exhaustive study of historical *shakuhachi honkyoku* notations which do exist, there are indications that a mutually transforming relationship between *honkyoku* performance and its notation does exist today and probably existed in the past.

There are other areas of comparison between the *Heike monogatari* and *shakuhachi honkyoku*. For example, the role of Kakuichi and his "standardized" transcription of the *Heike monogatari* is paralleled in many respects by the founder of Kinko ryū, Kurosawa Kinko (1710-1770) and his standardized repertoire of over thirty *honkyoku*. This and other avenues of research, particularly relating to orality, notation, and transmission, which are suggested by the *Heike monogatari* model await the attention of future *honkyoku* scholars.

Besides its possible interactive relationship with what remains largely an oral performance, the role that notation plays in the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition differs from that of most western staff notation in one very fundamental way. *Honkyoku* notation instructs or reminds the performer what to do rather than what sounds to produce. It is action or process rather than product oriented. The symbols of *honkyoku* notation denote fingering positions, articulation methods, and other performance techniques. In this respect, it is similar to various tablature systems in other musical traditions in depicting the act of performing. In contrast, staff notation is product oriented, functioning primarily to prescribe (or describe) the final product, the sound.

Differences between *honkyoku* notation and staff notation can be divided into three areas. In *honkyoku* notation, pitch is not notated at all, other than indirectly through the tablature symbols denoting fingerings and other pitch-changing techniques. Secondly, though durations are notated in general, they are at most used only as a broad and imprecise guide and are frequently ignored altogether, in contrast to the rigid precision of staff notation in representing durations (Lee 1991:32-33). Finally, the timbre or tone colour of each note, a vital element of *honkyoku* performance, is directly or indirectly indicated by traditional *shakuhachi* notation. In contrast, timbre is all but ignored in the majority of music scores written in staff notation.

These differences between *honkyoku* notation and staff notation illuminate an aspect of *honkyoku* that approaches its very essence. The most important part of a *honkyoku* performance is the act of playing the *honkyoku*. The significance of the doing or process and relative unimportance of the resultant sound or product in performing *honkyoku* is best illustrated by the often told story involving the well-known *shakuhachi* master Watazumi and popular radio personality Ei Rokusuke (永六輔). In

the 1970s, Ei Rokusuke, accompanied by his production crew, went to interview the eccentric Watazumi in Tōkyō. The interview took place in an old house of traditional Japanese architecture.

After the suitable exchange of greeting, gifts, and small talk, Watazumi began to perform *honkyoku* for his audience. Before completing the first phrase, however, Watazumi suddenly stopped, exclaiming that there was not enough air for him to play. “Open up the room!”, he ordered. Being a traditionally constructed Japanese house, the entire wall of the room facing the small garden outside could be removed, which it immediately was. “Ah, that’s better!”, said the now contented Watazumi, who then proceeded to perform a piece which lasted over fifteen minutes.

The problem, Ei Rokusuke later recounted, was that there was heavy road construction just down the road from the house, and that now with the entire wall facing the road taken away, Watazumi’s playing was barely audible. As this did not seem to bother Watazumi in the slightest, there was nothing to do but sit quietly and wait until the “performance” was over. At this point, Ei Rokusuke and his crew thought that Watazumi was indeed the crazy eccentric that he was reputed to be.

What interested Ei Rokusuke most about the performance, however, was his perception that by the end of the inaudible performance his state of being and the atmosphere of the entire room had changed. According to Ei Rokusuke, there was a calmness, a good feeling that was difficult to describe. Ei Rokusuke and his crew left Watazumi satisfied with the interview even though they were not able to record any *shakuhachi* music that was suitable for radio use.

The point of the story is that Watazumi himself did not value the product of his performance, the audible sound, as much as he did the process of the performance. In this case, part of that process involved opening the room in order to get enough air, at the expense of the audience not being able to hear the piece.

The emphasis on process rather than product in *honkyoku* performance operates on the smaller level of the phrase or the individual technique as well. On occasions, one performing technique is chosen over another even though the choice does not affect the final product. Examples of this can be found in the notation itself. In one phrase of the Chikuho *ryū* piece, “*Yamato Choshi*” (大和調子), the performer must execute a *dai furi* (大, ‘big’; ‘shake, wave’; a ‘head-bending’ technique), that is, as big as possible. Because of the nature of the technique, the sound produced may or may not be changed by executing the *furi* technique larger than normal. That is not a problem, however, since the idea is for the performer to execute and therefore feel “big” *furi*. It does not matter if he can hear the product of his action. This example is one of many cases in which a performance technique not connected to any particular resultant sound is notated (Figure 7). There are other similar examples of processes of performance which do not produce noticeable changes in the musical sound and which are transmitted orally from one generation to the next rather than being notated.

The idea of “doing” or playing *honkyoku* being given more importance than the resultant sound produced is compatible with the concept of “emptiness” in *honkyoku* playing discussed above (p.203). On this level, there is no right or wrong way to perform *honkyoku*, at least as determined by the resultant audible sounds.

As with the fundamental difference, that of process versus product, the three associated dissimilarities between *honkyoku* and staff notation concerning pitch, durations (rhythm), and timbre also shed light upon the question of what is being transmitted in the *honkyoku* tradition.

Mention here must be made of the widespread use of sound recordings and, more recently, video recordings by members of the *shakuhachi* tradition. These recordings must be considered elements of transmission as much as written documents such as scores. Almost all *honkyoku* players listen to the ever-increasing number of recordings of *honkyoku* performed by a growing number of performers. Furthermore, lessons are frequently recorded, with the teacher's permission.⁶⁹ In the past, concerts of traditional music in Japan were noted for the pervasive distractions of cassette tape recorders being loaded or turned on and off.

Recordings contribute to the dissemination of various styles of *honkyoku* performance in the same way that public concerts and recitals do, but to a greater extent. More people have more opportunities to listen to more *shakuhachi* performers because of recordings. One of the effects recordings have on the transmission of *honkyoku* is the acceleration of cross-over of performance techniques and style between players of different lineages and teachers. Though actually taking lessons from a teacher who is not a member of the lineage of one's original teacher is highly frowned upon in much of the *shakuhachi* world, there is no prohibition of listening to recordings. Examples of variation between performances which suggest that cross-over may be partially attributed to recordings will be shown in the analysis of "Reibo" (Chapter 6).

Recordings of *honkyoku* are believed to be helpful in learning new pieces. They can facilitate in the committing of a piece to heart, but they cannot transmit all that is *honkyoku*. Recordings present only an analogue of a single manifestation among infinite possible manifestations of any one *honkyoku*. In terms of the "essence" of *honkyoku*, recordings neither help nor harm its transmission. In this sense, as analogues they, like notation, are misleading only if they are mistaken for the real thing. The subject of recordings and *honkyoku* is examined further below, in the discussion on transcriptions and their use in the analysis of *honkyoku* (pp.[313-314](#)).

5.4 Three Formal Elements of Transmission in the *Honkyoku* Tradition: Lineage, Lessons, and Notation

The previous sections dealt with concepts and philosophies relating to the subject of transmission in general and transmission of *shakuhachi honkyoku* specifically. The nature of orality was also touched upon in connection with *honkyoku*. Finally, the related subject of documents and their function and status in the *honkyoku* tradition was addressed. This section continues the discussion of transmission of *honkyoku* by outlining briefly formal elements of transmission that can be observed in the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition. A number of aspects of three elements, lineage-

⁶⁹ For a brief period of time in the late 1970s, one teacher, Sakai Chikuho II, allowed his lessons to be recorded, but charged the student extra for the privilege.

centred organizations, lessons, and notations are addressed below. A fourth element, performance, will be discussed in the following section.

The first formal element of transmission is lineage-centred organizations, as distinct from lineages. In this study, the word lineage is used to denote the individual line of transmission from an individual teacher to an individual student then to his own student, and so forth. Lineages can be traced whenever it is known who taught whom, and occur both within and without large organizational structures. Nonetheless, much of the *shakuhachi* tradition has existed within large formal organizations. The earliest known formal *shakuhachi* organization is the Fuke sect of the Edo period (see Chapter 3, pp.[110-139](#)).

As discussed in Chapter 1 (pp.[20-21](#)), the Japanese have a propensity to create and belong to groups, their entire lives frequently revolving within a number of well-defined groups such as family, school, company, the Japanese people, and hobby. As is to be expected, this group mentality is evident in the *shakuhachi* tradition. Although the tendency to create and join organizations can also be seen in the more specialized tradition of the *honkyoku*, far more individualism is evident there than in the *shakuhachi* tradition⁷⁰ and Japanese society as a whole.

In the past century, since the proscription of the Fuke sect in the late 1800s, members of the *shakuhachi* tradition have continued to form groups within which the transmission of the tradition largely occurred (see Chapter 3, pp.[154-164](#)). Some have flourished and dissipated, while others remain active. These groups are known by such words as *ryû* (流, ‘stream’), *ha* (派, ‘group’), and *kai* (会, ‘society’). Their primary functions have been and continue to be bureaucratic and social, providing a power base from which a few members of the tradition are able to exert influence on what is transmitted, and how, over a larger number of members. This is not to say that transmission does not take place within the context of organizations, but that such transmission is not their main function.

As discussed above (pp.[149-150](#)), transmission of *honkyoku* has always occurred outside the context of organizations, even during the monopolistic period of the Fuke sect. In general, transmission that occurs within organizations is more conservative and less subject to variability and change than that which occurs outside organizations. This can be seen in the Kinko *honkyoku* tradition, which has been transmitted largely within various organizations under the Kinko *ryû* umbrella (Tukitani 1990a:6). Pieces within this tradition are conspicuously resistant to change and variation when compared with *honkyoku* transmitted outside such organizations. This can be seen both in numbers, titles, and performance. The thirty-six *honkyoku* in the Kinko repertoire comprises only a fraction of the nearly two hundred *honkyoku*

⁷⁰ It must be remembered that the majority of *shakuhachi* players in Japan today, belong to either the largest *shakuhachi* organization, Tozan *ryû*, or one of its breakaway organizations. None of these organizations has classical *honkyoku* in its repertoire. Furthermore, even among those players who can perform *honkyoku*, the majority of them, especially almost all of the members of the various branches of the Kinko *ryû*, play secular pieces such as traditional ensemble pieces or modern works, far more often than they do *honkyoku*. The *shakuhachi* players who play *honkyoku* exclusively, or who perform them outside the bureaucratic setting of an organization, are a tiny minority.

and their variations which are said to exist (Tukitani 1990a:32). Furthermore, large *shakuhachi* organizations can even be detrimental to the transmission of *honkyoku*. Tozan *ryū*, the largest *shakuhachi* organization in Japan in terms of membership and financial strength, has no classical *honkyoku* in its repertoire, and actively discourages its members from studying with any teacher who performs classical *honkyoku*.

In my view, in many cases the essence of *honkyoku*, musically, philosophically, and spiritually, continues to be transmitted from generation to generation in spite of the organizations. The richness of variation that can be observed, for example, in the analyses of “*Reibo*” (Chapter 6) occurs mainly outside the context of large organizations, although variation and change inevitably take place even within the Kinko tradition (Syakuhati kenkyū kai 1991:2-10).

It is precisely because of the bureaucratic power these organizations wield, and because the *honkyoku* tradition outside their domain has always been less conspicuous than that which exists within them, that this thesis deals only indirectly with the transmission of *honkyoku* in terms of *shakuhachi* organizations.

Perhaps for the first time in the history of the *shakuhachi* tradition, an exception to the trend of great influence residing mainly within *shakuhachi* organizations has taken place in the personage of Watazumi.⁷¹ There are two primary reasons why Watazumi, who has consciously distanced himself from all *shakuhachi* organizations, has been able to strongly influence the *honkyoku* tradition in general. First of all, Watazumi's *honkyoku* have been promulgated to a great extent by his student Yokoyama,⁷² in his capacity as one of Japan's (and the world's) best known and most respected *shakuhachi* performers, through his many concerts and recordings, and by the many students of Yokoyama. Secondly, Watazumi has himself released a number of widely distributed recordings of his *honkyoku*, an avenue of dissemination unavailable to preceding generations of independent *honkyoku* performers. This is all the more remarkable because Watazumi is the antithesis of the formal *shakuhachi* organization. He is, in fact, the antithesis of the *shakuhachi* player, as will be seen in the examination of his ideologies (pp.302-304) and in the comparison of his performances of “*Reibo*” with those of other players (Chapter 6).

The second formal element of transmission is the lesson. The most typical setting in which the student is taught the mechanical techniques of a piece is a one-to-one lesson. Features of a typical *shakuhachi* lesson have been described elsewhere, particularly those features which differ from or have no counterpart to those of a western musical lesson (Gutzwiller 1983:64-89, Lee 1986:141-159). These features include the largely non-verbal and intuitive method of learning by imitation; the system of a monthly retaining fee rather than a payment based upon the number and length of the lessons; and finally the non-scheduled lesson days and the related practice of having the lesson in the presence of other students.

⁷¹ Watazumi is one of six performers whose recorded performances are transcribed and analysed in Chapter 6.

⁷² Yokoyama is also one of six performers whose recorded performances are transcribed and analysed in Chapter 6.

It is largely during the lesson that the relationship between the teacher and the student of *shakuhachi* develops. This relationship is partly determined by the larger cultural setting in which it occurs, and partly by the nature of the *shakuhachi* tradition itself. For example, much of the *honkyoku* is transmitted intuitively, with verbal or practical explanation considered neither desirable nor possible. This intuitive form of transmission and the importance given it within the *honkyoku* tradition contribute to the high value placed upon the development of a proper relationship between teacher and student. This relationship is further elevated in Japan by the neo-Confucian ethics evident in the *shakuhachi* tradition and prevalent in much of traditional Japanese culture.

Another example can be found in the role mutual respect plays in the teacher-student relationship in the *shakuhachi* tradition. Ideally, one of the main elements in the nurturing of the proper relationship between teacher and student is mutual respect. With a mutual and intuitive perception of each other, the teacher and the student develop respect for one another. Though the respect is mutual, the nature of the respect harboured by the teacher for the student and that which the student has for the teacher are not the same, just as the roles of teacher and student differ. This difference can be more pronounced in Japan's hierarchical, neo-Confucianist traditional society than it is in other more egalitarian societies where *shakuhachi* is now being performed and transmitted. As acknowledgement of the priceless gift of instruction, the Japanese teacher and society in general expect much more from the student in terms of time, servitude and money than would be expected by Western teachers and their society.

The remaining discussion about lessons and teaching methods is based upon my own experience as *shakuhachi* student for twenty-two years and teacher for fourteen years as it relates to the subject of transmission. In my experience, the complete transmission of any single *honkyoku* never occurs within the lesson. Before the student is assigned a new piece to learn to play, he or she must first perform the current piece. Depending upon the piece and the student, the use of notation may or may not be permitted. Among the many students who have studied with me, none has been able to perform a *honkyoku* piece to my satisfaction while learning the piece. In other words, even when the student can perform the piece at a level which warrants going on to the next piece, that level of performance has never been completely satisfactory.

This does not prevent us from eventually leaving one *honkyoku* aside and going on to another. There have been occasions outside the lesson context when, upon hearing a student or former student perform a *honkyoku* learned from me at some time in the past, I have thought that the performance was quite well done. It seems that regardless of how much and how long a student studies a piece with me, it is never played as well as it could be.

It is only after the student takes the piece and performs it outside the boundaries imposed by the lessons that it is ever played to my liking. It is as if *shakuhachi* students cannot perform a *honkyoku* well as long as they still believe it belongs to the teacher, who can determine, by virtue of the teacher's ownership, if the student is performing the *honkyoku* "correctly" or not. In my experience as both student and teacher, this is invariably the case when the *honkyoku* is performed by the student in the context of a lesson.

This also seems to be true regardless of the length of time spent on a piece, and even when a student reviews a piece that had been learned a number of years before. It appears to me that the full transmission of a piece does not take place until the *shakuhachi* performer stops learning the piece as something separate from one's self, i.e., something belonging to the teacher rather than the student. Only after a *honkyoku* can be played with the conviction that it is the performer's own piece, beyond the criticism of the teacher, or anyone else, can the *honkyoku* be played to its potential. My thoughts on this are, no doubt, strongly influenced by my concept of *honnin no kyoku* (本人の曲, 'the piece of the person in question'—that is, the performer of the piece).

The idea of *honnin no kyoku* is the belief that for the performer, each *honkyoku* must become “that particular individual's own piece”. The idea of *honnin no kyoku* encompasses the belief that in order for a piece to become “one's own”, the performer must imbue his performance of the piece with the very essence of his nature, including all of his past unique experiences, disappointments, and satisfactions of life as well as his present wisdom, hopes, and desires, and his health, vitality, or life force. If the performer does not put his “self” into the piece, thereby allowing the piece to become a part of him, the piece will remain outside the performer, something separate from him, and consequently will not become *honnin no kyoku* (see pp. [229,267](#)).

It follows that pieces which the performer has allowed to become *honnin no kyoku* have become an actual part of that performer, there no longer being a separation or distinction between the piece and the performer. The piece is a part of the performer; each performance of the piece is a manifestation, however fragmentary, of the essence of the performer, laid bare for all to see (hear). Thus, when a teacher endeavors to transmit to a student a piece that has become for the teacher *honnin no kyoku*, he is actually attempting to transmit to the student a part of himself. A gift of such magnitude can never be repaid.

Changes may occur to a *honkyoku* during the lesson. Yokoyama has said that if one understands a piece, one knows what may and may not be changed. There are times when I consciously change the way I teach a piece, a phrase, or a particular technique during the lesson. Some of the changes made to pieces I have been teaching for many years can be attributed to the different performing styles of my original teacher, Sakai Chikuho II, with whom I studied for over ten years, and of my teacher since 1984, Yokoyama Katsuya.⁷³ With many of the changes, however, there appear to be no set patterns of when and how I might make them. There are times when I consciously decide at the instant of teaching a phrase, the manner in which I will perform the phrase, choosing from an ever increasing number of ways to perform it. This becomes more difficult with pieces that I have taught innumerable times. The ever-increasing challenge as I teach the same pieces repeatedly to more and more students is to allow those *honkyoku* to continue to vary with the varying circumstances of every new performance.

In spite of knowing that I change pieces, students are discouraged from changing the way I have taught a phrase or technique, especially during the lesson. One cannot

⁷³ This is an example of the type of change which may explain many of the variations which will be seen in the analysis of the piece “*Reibo*” in Chapter 6.

know how to change a *honkyoku* until the *honkyoku* is internalized. The *honkyoku* is automatically externalized during the lesson because of the relationship between teacher and student. That hierarchical relationship demands the recognition by the student of the authority or ownership of the *honkyoku* by the teacher, at least in the context of the lesson. To say that one cannot know how to change a *honkyoku* is the same as saying one cannot know how to play a *honkyoku*, because change is inevitable.

It is therefore necessary for the student of *honkyoku* eventually to throw off the student role in the teacher-student relationship and claim ownership of the *honkyoku*. This idea is behind Yokoyama's comment that the student must eventually cut himself off from the teacher (see p.417), and may partially explain Watazumi's refusal to acknowledge that anyone taught him the "*Reibo*" piece (see p.302). In summary, a major part of the transmission of *honkyoku* takes place during the lesson, but the transmission can never be completed there. The lesson is only where the seed of *honkyoku* is planted in the mind and being of the student. Whether or not it germinates, and if so how it grows after that depends upon the subsequent efforts of the performer to cast aside the role of student.

In teaching and in learning *honkyoku*, I have used scores written in traditional *shakuhachi* notation, including notation systems of the Chikuho, Kinko, Myôan and Tozan⁷⁴ lineages. In my experience as student, it was my responsibility to annotate the scores being used in whatever manner I chose in order to help remember how to perform the piece. As a rule, neither Sakai nor Yokoyama wrote on my score. If I did not play an embellishment or note or phrase as they wished me to or if I omitted something, they would tell me and play the passage in question for me again. It was up to me to remember the passage. Writing a word or symbol on the score as a reminder was completely permissible. If I thought that I could remember the passage without noting it down, that was also acceptable. Finally, my teachers did not tell me it was my responsibility to annotate the scores. Nothing was said on the matter one way or the other.

In my experience as teacher, I find myself making annotations to the scores of my students instead of allowing them to do it themselves.. This may be indicative primarily of my own impatience and of the cultural background of both the students and myself in which the teacher plays a more active role than is found in the *shakuhachi* tradition in Japan. Although I am experimenting with refraining from interfering with the, in many cases, slower learning process of students, unaided by my annotations, how active a role to play as a teacher of *shakuhachi* outside Japan is still a dilemma for me.

Mention must be made of other methods of learning *honkyoku* that are available to today's *shakuhachi* student. These methods include a number of teach yourself books and recordings. For the majority of potential *shakuhachi* players outside of Japan,

⁷⁴ Though Tozan *ryû* does not have in its repertoire any classical *honkyoku*, a number of such *honkyoku* have been transnotated into the Tozan notation system. These notations are useful in teaching players who have had experience in using the Tozan notation system.

these are the only feasible ways of learning anything about performing *shakuhachi*, including *honkyoku*. As such, they are better than nothing at all. The obvious disadvantage of relying solely upon books and tape recordings to learn *honkyoku* lies in the nature of *honkyoku* and the importance placed upon the process of performing.

If the essence of *honkyoku* lies in the process, then that essence can only be suggested by recordings, which are representations of the product of a single process. Likewise, written instructions describing the process of performing *honkyoku* can only present a description of a single process out of an innumerable number of processes. A great deal of diligent practice by a talented performer who has relied solely upon recordings and books to learn pieces in the *honkyoku* repertoire may result in beautiful music, but it is unlikely that the essence of *honkyoku* will have been transmitted. But then, much more unlikely events take place constantly in our universe.

In addition to lineage-centred organizations and lessons, notation used to represent *honkyoku* is another formal element of transmission. Traditional notation used in the *honkyoku* tradition and its relationship with *honkyoku* performance has been dealt with in detail in the sections on orality and on documents and performance (see above pp.[237-250](#)). Suffice it to say that scores of *honkyoku*, whether written in traditional notation, in western notation, or in one of the graphic notations which have been developed recently as a teach-yourself method, all function as aids or tools to facilitate the transmission of *honkyoku*.

The emphasis or value given to *honkyoku* scores varies from lineage to lineage and between teachers. More bureaucratically inclined lineages place a greater value upon the scores than lineages less so inclined. Some lineages use no scores at all. Some have no “official” *honkyoku* scores, using instead whatever is available and/or encouraging the student to develop his own score. The more organized lineages have “official” scores which are copyrighted and sold for a price. As seen in the example of Araki’s score of “*Shika no tōne*”, discussed in Chapter 2 (pp.[30-32](#)), scores are sometimes used as a physical representation of the successful transmission of the immaterial *honkyoku*.

The increased use of staff notation in scores for *shakuhachi* music, by both composers of music for *shakuhachi* and by *shakuhachi* performers, has resulted in a number of changes in the *shakuhachi* tradition. One such change has been the standardization of pitch, partly because staff notation denotes pitch while traditional *shakuhachi* notation denotes fingerings (see Lee 1988:71-79). Although staff notation can act as a catalyst for a greater standardization of pitch, its use is almost entirely limited to modern compositions. Scores of classical *honkyoku* in staff notation exist only as transcriptions in scholarly articles and, to my knowledge, have never been used in actual teaching/learning or performing situations.

In all of the above cases, the scores are not the *honkyoku*. Like words, they do not mean anything, but rather they represent something. In order to find the meaning of *honkyoku*, one must look to the performance. Four aspects of performance are the subject of the following section.

5.5 The Fourth Formal Element of Transmission: Performance

The fourth formal element of transmission to be addressed in this thesis is that of performance. Of all the elements of transmission, performance is the most significant. It is in the performance of *honkyoku* that all the historical, philosophical, spiritual, and technical elements of the *honkyoku* tradition come together as a unified whole. As is the case of all oral traditions, the *honkyoku* tradition is maintained only during performance. Once a *honkyoku* is no longer performed, it becomes extinct. Furthermore, the most recent performance of a *honkyoku* is the most authoritative, due to its characteristics as an oral performance.

In the following discussion, the element of performance is viewed through three of its aspects; that relating to timbre such as the notion of “complete sound”, that relating to pitch such as the *meri/kari* techniques and instrument making and, finally, that relating to rhythm such as the notion of “absolute timing”. Though separation of *honkyoku* performance into the aspects of timbre, pitch, and rhythm, reflect western cultural patterns of thought, they will be approached in this thesis from the perspective of the, largely non-western, insider to the *honkyoku* tradition.

5.5.1 The Aspect of Timbre

The first of the aspects of performance enumerated above, relating to timbre or tone colour, overlaps the second aspect, that of pitch. The intertwining of timbre and pitch in the *honkyoku* tradition can be seen in the discussion below of the *meri/kari* techniques. Though timbre and pitch are never completely separate in performance, they will be isolated for the purpose of the discussion. A brief comparison between how timbre is treated in the *honkyoku* tradition and in the dominant western music cultures will demonstrate a number of its characteristics.

In many Western instrument traditions, particularly that of nineteenth century art music, the ideal is of even and consistent timbre throughout the pitch range of the instrument and in almost all musical contexts. The piano is the most extreme example of the Western trend to produce even voicing, standardized and unvarying pitches. In general, modern Western musical instruments tend to maintain the same timbre at all times, in contrast to the unevenness of early instruments. There are exceptions, such as the *pizzicato* technique on the violin, or modern pieces that purposely attempt to extend the variety of tonal production of an instrument, such as in pieces for the “prepared piano”. Additionally, with the advent of electronically manipulated sound, changes in the timbre of a single instrument have become more common than in the past, with the modern synthesizer being the extreme example of multiple timbres of one instrument.

Nonetheless, the general rule for many traditional Western instruments is that they are constructed and played so as to minimize changes in timbre, especially within a single phrase or while sustaining a single note. Gutzwiller and Bennett (1991:51) have shown examples of this with graphs of the spectral evolution of a crescendo and decrescendo played on a transverse flute. The dynamic evolution of the partials of the tone produced by the transverse flute are relatively synchronic. The human ear

perceives the timbre to be constant with the increase and decrease of the dynamics (Figure 8).

In contrast, there is no single most desirable timbre for *shakuhachi*, especially in the context of *honkyoku* performance. The *shakuhachi* player is required to produce a number of tone colours from his instrument, including sounds that are without a specific pitch. More than one change in timbre commonly occurs within a single phrase or even a single note, the tone colour evolving from the beginning to the end of the phrase or note. Unlike the transverse flute example above, graphs of the spectral evolution of a crescendo and decrescendo produced by a *shakuhachi* show that the partials of the tone reach their relative maxima at different times (Gutzwiller and Bennett 1991:50). A change in timbre as well as dynamics is perceived by the human ear (Figure 9).

The *shakuhachi* is not unique in its production of poly-timbres. Many other traditional instruments in Japan and elsewhere in Asia are routinely played so as to generate various timbres and non-pitched sounds. For example, the Japanese stringed instruments, the *koto*, the *shamisen*, and the *biwa* are all played with various techniques such as plucking the strings at different locations, scraping the strings and hitting the body of the instrument with the picks or plectrum to create variations in timbre.

Of all the musical elements, timbre is possibly the most difficult for musicians untrained in the physics of acoustics to accurately describe, measure, and quantify. Words commonly used to describe differences in timbre illustrate this problem; usually they are terms borrowed from other sensory perceptions and are extremely subjective and relative, for example, “warm” or “cold”, “mellow”, “blue”, “harsh”, etc. The timbre of sounds, including those produced with a *shakuhachi*, may, in fact, be accurately measured and described in mathematical terms, using concepts such as input admittance, resonance curves, and peak frequencies. Such acoustical analyses are for the most part beyond the scope of this thesis. Studies that deal with the timbre of the *shakuhachi* in these and other terms include Ando 1983a, 1983b, 1986; Ando and Ohyagi 1984, 1985; and Gutzwiller and Bennett 1991.

In the study of Gutzwiller and Bennett (1991:36-59), the acoustical characteristics of the *shakuhachi* are described and combined with a knowledge of the *shakuhachi* tradition. That is, the basic musical structure of *honkyoku*, which Gutzwiller calls the “tone cell”, is examined in terms of its physical development. The evolution of timbre within a musical phrase compliments the musical meaning of the phrase.

The two most common variations of timbre performed on the *shakuhachi* are related to breath and embouchure. Frequently the *shakuhachi* performer purposely adds a breathiness to the flute sound by over-blowing and by changing the position of his mouth, tongue and lips to create a rough air stream. A very light touch of breathiness added to a soft tone is sometimes referred to as *sasabuki* (笹吹き, literally ‘bamboo grass blowing’). This technique is supposed to bring to mind the sound of a gentle breeze blowing through small bamboo grass. The technique known by all *shakuhachi* players as *mura iki* (ムラ息), commonly translated as ‘thrashing breath’ is one of the most well-known and dramatic *shakuhachi* performing techniques. *Mura iki* is a very violent and loud burst of air through the instrument and is mostly non-pitched.

Partly because each *shakuhachi* is made of an individual piece of bamboo, no two pieces having the same inner and outer dimensions, and partly because the instruments are all hand made, every flute has a unique sound. Many players believe that those qualities desirable in instruments used in *honkyoku* performances are different from those qualities desirable in instruments used for modern pieces and/or ensemble works. These qualities include timbre and pitch; the latter instruments should generally be louder, brighter, and more accurately pitched than instruments for *honkyoku* use. The main quality desirable in a *shakuhachi* used for *honkyoku* performance is an acceptable timbre or tone colour. “Right” timbre is difficult to define precisely, being mostly a matter of personal taste. It is expressed by such vague concepts as the “soul” or “heart of the bamboo” (竹心, *chikushin*), or that sound which has great “depth”.

All players also have their individual sound; the connoisseur can frequently tell who is playing just by listening to the tone quality of the performer. Though the same may be said of other instruments, this is particularly true of the *shakuhachi*. This is because the embouchure and mouth cavity, which vary dramatically with each player, are in fact a major part of the instrument. However hard a student tries to create a sound exactly like that of his teacher, his chances of sounding the same are as slight as his being identical in appearance.

There is no ideal or standard sound for the *shakuhachi*. Generally speaking, a consistently pure or clean sound such as is cultivated by performers of the western transverse flute is not as valued in playing the *shakuhachi*. More hiss or air in the tone is acceptable to or even desired by the *shakuhachi* performer. In fact one of the frequently heard criticisms levelled against *shakuhachi* players by other *shakuhachi* players is that their tone quality is too “flute-like”. A student of Yamaguchi Gorô said that his teacher taught him that the airy sound, which a western flute player would attempt to eliminate entirely as unwanted noise, is essential in the *shakuhachi* tone. The tone produced by the typical beginning *shakuhachi* player is almost all hiss. But rather than try to eliminate the hiss as the flute player might do, the beginner should strive only to increase the flute tone. Gorô likened the “hissing noise” to pepper. All noise and no tone, as might be the case of a beginner’s playing, is like eating a spoonful of pepper without any food: unpalatable. In contrast, that same spoonful of pepper spread over a great enough quantity of food will make the food all the more delicious. With the production of enough “flute sound”, the hissing sound acts like the pepper, adding just enough spice to the tone to make it better (Kudo OC1984).

One of the most frequently occurring instances of timbre change within a single phrase is that related to the *meri/kari* techniques (changes in timbre and in pitch produced without changing the fingering, by altering the angle and distance from the embouchure to the blowing edge of the mouthpiece) (see p.323). By applying the *meri* technique to a particular fingering position, not only is the pitch normally produced by that fingering position lowered, the timbre is altered as well, becoming more muted and nasal-sounding, and decreasing in dynamics. Notes played using the *meri* technique also may become more breathy than the more frequently occurring *kari* notes. In contrast, *kari* notes are louder and sharp in pitch. Consequently, pieces in which *meri/kari* techniques are used, including virtually every classical *honkyoku*, will exhibit constant variation in tone colour, a direct result of the differences in tonal production between *meri* and *kari* notes.

As in the case of much of the other tonal variation that occurs in *shakuhachi* performance, the *shakuhachi* performer does not attempt to minimize differences in timbre between *meri* and *kari* notes. Instead these differences are not only considered desirable but even essential for the correct performance of the music. The contrasting timbres of the *meri* and *kari* notes is a fundamental aesthetic quality of *honkyoku*. For this reason alone, *honkyoku* can be performed only on the *shakuhachi*. No other musical instrument can produce such variation in timbre and dynamics. By using a system of colouring certain note heads, the transcriptions used in the analysis of the *honkyoku* “*Reibo*” (Chapter 6) attempt to reflect the importance placed upon the differences in timbre as related to the *meri* and *kari* techniques (see p.[353-354](#)).

An important concept pertaining to the quality of sound in the *honkyoku* tradition is described as *tettei on* (徹底音, literally ‘thorough’ or ‘complete sound’). Yokoyama (1985:228) uses the term *hon ne* (本音, literally ‘main’ or ‘original sound’) for the same concept. This clearly links the concept with the *honkyoku* itself, and also with that of *honnin no kyoku*. The idea is that *hon ne* must be produced by the performer if the *honkyoku* is to become *honnin no kyoku* (his ‘own piece’).

The expression *hon ne* commonly means “one’s true intentions” or “one’s real motives”, and is frequently used in the dichotomy *hon ne* and *tatemaie* (建前, literally ‘before building’, that is, erecting the framework of a house) (Masuda, ed. 1983:1750). In this case, *tatemaie* means one’s stated or “official” intentions. In Japanese society in general, it is almost always assumed that *hon ne* and *tatemaie*, one’s true intentions and one’s stated intentions, are (and should be) two quite different things. One’s actions and responses toward others are usually affected by that assumption. Being able to grasp how much or how little of one’s own *hon ne* should be evident in one’s *tatemaie*, to sense the *hon ne* of others from their *tatemaie*, to understand how to incorporate the intuitive sense one may have of other’s *hon ne* without causing any loss of face, and knowing how to do all of these things instantaneously in a prudent, socially acceptable manner are all essential skills needed to function in much of Japan’s society.

There is an interesting Japanese idiom using the expression *hon ne*. *Hon ne o fuku* (本音を吹く) means to ‘drop [throw off] one’s mask’ or ‘give oneself away’ (Masuda, ed. 1983:482). The etymological suitability of this expression in terms of the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition could not be greater. The word *fuku* (吹く) most commonly means to blow, as in ‘to blow air into a *shakuhachi*’, or ‘to play’ as in ‘to play a wind instrument’. The *shakuhachi honkyoku* player really is trying to uncover his “true” or “original self” when attempting to blow *hon ne*, to play the ‘original sound’ while performing *honkyoku*.

Yokoyama does not use the expression *honnin no kyoku* (see pp.[229,255](#)), but uses instead *honnin no shirabe* (本人の調べ). The word *shirabe* corresponds to a surprising number of words in English related to music, among which are ‘a note; a tune; a melody’ and ‘music’ itself (Masuda, ed. 1983:1567). The character for *shirabe* (調) can also be read *chô*. When combined with the character *shi* (子), the word *chôshi* (調子) is formed, which can be defined in this context as ‘mode’.

To my knowledge, there are *shirabe* or *chôshi* pieces in every *shakuhachi* school or lineage that has a repertoire of classical *honkyoku*. In the Kinko ryû repertoire, there are two such pieces, “*Hifumi hachigaeshi*” (一二三鉢返),⁷⁵ and “*Banshiki shirabe*” (盤渉調). In the Chikuho ryû, there are four such pieces, “*Honte chôshi*” (本手調子); “*Yamato chôshi*” (大和調子); “*Hifumi chô*” (一二三調); and “*Chôshi*” (調子). Also, there are a number of pieces, including “*Shôganken reibo*”, which have a beginning section called ‘*Shirabe*’. On a superficial level, these pieces or sections of pieces are considered preludes, tunings, or warm-ups for the larger pieces.

There is another set of definitions for the ideograph 調, however, which gives a deeper meaning to the “*Shirabe*” or “*Chôshi*” pieces and which Yokoyama is alluding to in his use of the term *honnin no shirabe*. These definitions include “investigate, scrutinize; provide, prepare... test, examine, survey, check up; inspect, overhaul; search for... interrogate... arrange... put to order, tidy up... regulate; settle” (Nelson 1974:4392). *Honnin no shirabe* can therefore mean ‘searching for one’s true or original self’. The *Shirabe* pieces of the *honkyoku* repertoire therefore can mean a searching for the relationship between the true nature of both performer and bamboo flute, searching for a relationship between the two that is most conducive to performing *honkyoku*.

To make a *honkyoku* into a *honnin no shirabe* is, according to Yokoyama (1985:228), to change it into a piece that is absolutely and unconditionally one’s own. To do that, the performer must entrust the sound of his *shakuhachi* with the most sincere and urgent expression of *hon ne* (one’s true self). Such a *hon ne*, in Yokoyama’s words, is a desperate matter taking on life or death dimensions. But by doing so, the sound becomes an “ideal” sound and the piece an “absolute” piece. Though Yokoyama does not state this, implied in his use of the word *shirabe* in the phrase *honnin no shirabe* is the process of searching for, examining, or preparing one’s Self. The task of playing *honkyoku* with *hon ne* (absolute sound), thereby making the pieces *honnin no shirabe* (a search for one’s original self) requires a lifetime of practice. *Honkyoku* becomes one’s life’s work.

On a more mundane level, a performance of *honkyoku* in which the performer has incorporated the idea of *hon ne* is likely to reflect the uniqueness of the *honnin*, the performer, and result in a unique performance. The many kinds of variations between the ten performances of “*Reibo*” that are brought to light in the analysis (Chapter 6) are consistent with the realization of *hon ne* in performance.

Within the philosophical framework of the *honkyoku* tradition, the significance of *honkyoku* goes beyond even that of a practice worthy of the devotion of one’s entire life. Each individual *honkyoku* is considered a manifestation or reflection of the whole universe, of all of reality and non-reality, of everything physical and metaphysical. This is thought to be so because of the philosophical symbolism of the *meri/kari* techniques. These techniques and the sounds they produce are considered to represent the yin and yang (Japanese *in yô*, 陰陽) of the original Chinese philosophy. Yin, the principle or force of the universe that is earthy, passive, inward, negative, and

⁷⁵ In many of the Myôan lineages, this piece is thought of as two separate pieces, “*Hifumi chô*” (一二三調) and “*Hachigaeshi*”.

feminine, corresponds to the *meri* technique and the tone it produces. Yang is the universal force or principle that is light, heat, active, outward, positive, and masculine, corresponds to the *kari* technique and the tone it produces. Yin and yang always both contrast and complement each other; without one, the other does not exist. Together, they form the universe in the broadest sense of the word. The same is considered true of the *meri/ kari* techniques and their corresponding tones.

The yin-yang symbolism of *meri/kari* can be readily appreciated on a number of levels. Notes that are played with the *kari* technique are in fact loud, outward, bright, and “masculine” in tone quality and dynamics, while notes played with the *meri* technique are soft, inward, earthy and “feminine”. Furthermore, yin and yang correspond perfectly to the actual physical movements associated with the *meri/kari* techniques respectively. In order to play a *meri* note, the performer must change his embouchure in two ways. He must change the angle that the air stream from his mouth hits the blowing edge, and he must allow his lips to get closer to the blowing edge of the mouthpiece. The former is usually considered more important in the execution of the *meri* technique. The angle at which the air stream hits the blowing edge is changed by the performer bending his head downward while holding the flute loosely. The hands act only as a fulcrum, so that the mouthpiece of the flute moves downward with the head, while the bottom of the flute moves upward. The player appears to blow more into the flute. The movement is therefore both downward (earth) and inward, corresponding to the downward change in pitch and the softer, earthy change in tone colour.

Every *honkyoku* has both *meri* and *kari* notes and therefore manifests both yin and yang. Each *honkyoku* therefore can be thought of as an embodiment or expression of the entire universe, including both the physical and the metaphysical. Each performance of *honkyoku* then becomes not just the realization of one piece of music, but the enactment of creating “everything”. The “life and death” importance placed by Yokoyama on producing the “original sound” of the *honkyoku* becomes more comprehensible in the context of the yin-yang symbolism of the *meri/kari* techniques.

The completeness implied by the yin/yang symbolism of the *meri/kari* techniques exists on the level of the phrase as well as the entire piece. Many phrases in classical *honkyoku* have within them both the *meri* and *kari* notes of a yin-yang equivalent (Figure 10). In these cases the individual phrases themselves reflect the entire piece and become representative of the cosmos. More often, a phrase will end on the *meri* note of a yin-yang pair, followed by a phrase beginning with the *kari* equivalent to complete the pair (Figure 11). Finally, there are phrases that are composed almost entirely of *meri* notes, many of which are part of a yin-yang pair. Usually immediately following these phrases are *kari* phrases centered around the *kari* equivalent of the *meri* note of the preceding phrase.

Gutzwiler and Bennett (1991:54-56) describe the manifestation of the yin-yang principles in *honkyoku* performance as conceived in the Kinko *ryū*, particularly among the members of the Kawase branch. Tone cells, around which most Kinko *honkyoku* phrases are organized, evolve through three stages: 1) *meri* beginning, 2) *kari* body, and 3) *meri* ending. These stages can be seen as circular, the ends always returning to the beginnings in an intertwining yin-yang-yin cycle (Figure 12). Likewise, the breathing process during *honkyoku* performance also manifests the non-

dualistic yin-yang principle. The inhalation is yin, with its inward, receptive qualities. The exhalation is yang, with its corresponding outward, projecting qualities.

In every *honkyoku* performance, the whole or “Oneness” is thus reflected on many levels, from the macro to the micro. This “Oneness” can be heard in the pitches as well as the timbres of the *meri* and *kari* notes, and can be physically felt by the performer during the process of performing these notes, using techniques such as *meri/kari* that are unique to and, at the same time fundamental to the *shakuhachi* tradition.

5.5.2 The Aspect of Pitch

Besides timbre, the *meri/kari* techniques are also one determinant of the second aspect of performance—that of pitch. Though pitch is conceived in varying ways among the different lineages of the *honkyoku* tradition, in general, the emphasis is not upon producing standardized pitch as it is in the dominant western music traditions, but rather upon the process of playing the pitches. *Honkyoku* are composed, notated and performed in such a manner that the production of pitches that are standardized in terms of western music is not necessarily of great concern. The following are factors that contribute to a conception of pitch in the minds of *honkyoku* players during performance that is (by western musical standards) variable and non-standard. Each of these will be discussed in more detail below:

1. The concept of the process of the *meri/kari* technique being more important than the production of standard pitches;
2. The vagueness and inconsistency of the score with regard to the notation of pitch;
3. The deliberate use of an instrument whose construction emphasizes timbre at the expense of standardized pitch production, whose blowing edge encourages variation in pitch, and whose finger holes historically have been located according to a mathematical equation (see below) rather than at locations which produce standardized pitches;
4. The custom of being able to play much of the *honkyoku* repertoire on any length instrument, including those whose fundamentals produce non-standard pitches;
5. The conscious variation of intervalic relationships such as larger or smaller than standard minor seconds, and the unconscious variation of pitches and interval relationships, such as sustained pitches descending over time, and finally;
6. The monophonic nature of the *honkyoku*, which does not require the production of standardized pitch.

First, the *meri/kari* techniques described above, which produce changes in timbre during performance, also produce simultaneous changes in pitch. Though the process of making the changes in both timbre and pitch through the *meri/kari* techniques is given great importance, the resultant pitches produced by those techniques may be variable. This is one of many examples of the process-oriented nature of *honkyoku*, with the product, in this case the pitches produced by the *meri/kari* techniques, being less important than the process. The methods of executing these techniques and the resultant pitch variations are elements which are transmitted from one performer to another. It will be shown in the analyses of performances of “*Reibo*” that differences in these methods correspond to the differences between lineages and individual performers.

Secondly, with regard to the effect of notation, as previously discussed in detail above (pp. [237-250](#), [259-260](#)), traditional *shakuhachi* notation systems are themselves process-oriented, instructing the player which fingering position and blowing techniques to use. They may also directly denote to a greater or lesser extent what pitch should be produced by the fingering and/or blowing processes. This factor is also determined in part by the lineage or teacher through which the transmission takes place. Lineages, and in some cases teachers, use their own differing notation, or no notation at all. Some notation systems are more precise in denoting pitch than others. Variations in pitch related to the differing notations are therefore directly linked to the transmission process, of which the lineage and the teacher are fundamental components.

Thirdly, the nature of the instrument as well as certain construction methods further help to form many *honkyoku* performers’ traditional concept of pitch. As mentioned above (p. [264](#)), instruments used in *honkyoku* performance ideally have certain qualities of timbre that are difficult to verbalize, being defined largely by personal taste. It is frequently considered more important that instruments on which *honkyoku* are to be performed have suitable timbre than that they produce those pitches which are considered western standards. In contrast, greater standardization of pitch is required of instruments that are used for ensemble piece playing and modern works composed largely within the framework of western musical theory. Thus, it is common for performers to own several *shakuhachi* instruments used especially for *honkyoku* performance, and others used for performing other genres of music.

Differences between types of instruments can be clearly seen by comparing instruments made before and after the turn of the 20th century. Earlier instruments are characterized by two construction techniques, one pertaining to the dimensions of the inner bore, called *ji nashi* (地無し), and the other involving the placement of fingerholes, called *to wari* (十割り) (see below). These instruments were more likely to have been used exclusively, or at least predominately, for *honkyoku*. *Honkyoku* were much more frequently performed before the 20th century; before the latter 1800s it was technically illegal to perform anything but *honkyoku*, though the law was often ignored (see pp. [139-149](#)). Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that some of the differences in construction of historical and modern *shakuhachi*, resulting in non-uniform pitch production, are due to the demands made by the different performance practices characteristic of *honkyoku* and of modern compositions.

In fact, the specialized *honkyoku* instruments mentioned above are, in one respect, made in a way similar to the historical instruments. Indicative of the practice of using specialized instruments for the different types of music is the growing popularity of instruments called *ji nashi shakuhachi* (地無し尺八) for *honkyoku* performance. Almost all *shakuhachi* made professionally within the last fifty years or more are constructed using some type of filler to create the proper dimensions of the bore. The most common filler used is called *ji* (地, literally ‘earth’), a mixture of *tonoko* (砥の粉, ‘powdered claystone’) and *urushi* (漆, ‘Japanese lacquer’). The term *ji nashi shakuhachi* (*nashi* = ‘without’) means *shakuhachi* instruments made without the use of *ji* as a filler in the bore. Such instruments were common before the advent of the professional *shakuhachi* maker, that is before this century. While *urushi* is still used in *ji nashi shakuhachi*, the very thin layers in which it must be applied in order to dry properly make *urushi* alone inappropriate as a filler (Tukitani et al. ed. 1991:9).

It is extremely difficult to make an instrument that plays well by today’s standards without any filler at all. Yet according to one maker (Yamaguchi 1991), *ji nashi* flutes have become somewhat in vogue in the past several years, and are used exclusively in the playing of *honkyoku*, or occasionally in modern pieces that require *honkyoku*-like techniques and phrases. The *ji nashi shakuhachi* are usually less accurately pitched, and generally more difficult to control than the standard modern instrument. The ability to produce a timbre with more of the soul of the bamboo, however, is thought to be worth the trade-off.

The construction of *shakuhachi* instruments, including standard modern ones made with *ji*, makes the consistent production of standardized pitches quite difficult. In addition, the unique shape of the blowing edge contributes to this difficulty. Without a good measure of technical ability resulting from many years of diligent practice, a trained ear that hears precise pitches and pitch intervals and, finally, the musical values and consequent desire to constantly be alert to and strive for the consistent production of standardized pitches as defined by the western musical tradition, variability in pitch will inevitably occur. In other words, unless the *shakuhachi* performer is both able to and wants to produce pitches consistent with the model of standardized pitches of western 19th century art music, the tendency is for pitch variation. Both the construction of the instrument and the music performed on it are not conducive to the production of standardized pitches.

The value placed on producing pitches that are not variable by western standards seems to be lower with many performers of *honkyoku* than with players who concentrate on other genres of *shakuhachi* music. This level of importance given to standardized pitch is another element of performance that is transmitted from performer to performer. It is one explanation for some of the variations in performances that are shown by the analysis in Chapter 6 (see p.[405-407](#)).

In the case of *ji nashi* flutes, large variations in the bore sizes of different flutes result in identical fingering positions producing different non-standard pitches on different instruments. The placement of the fingerholes can also be a determinant of pitch variation or consistency between instruments. Many *shakuhachi* instruments, especially those made before 1970 and/or by amateur or less-skilled makers, are constructed with the fingerholes placed so as to produce non-standard intervals between the pitches produced with various finger positions.

This older method of determining the placement of the fingerholes is called *to wari* (十割, ‘divided by ten’). *To wari* consisted of dividing the instrument into ten equal parts and positioning the finger holes at specified points corresponding to a certain number of “tenths” of the length of the instrument. No consideration is given to the bore dimensions of the bamboo being used. The result is variable pitches for each fingering position, in particular the fingering position which produces the pitches a’ and d” on modern standard 1.8 flutes. On flutes made with the *to wari* method, these two notes are usually sharper than on modern flutes. The positions of fingerholes on flutes made in the last decade by professional makers are usually dictated by the unique dimensions of points along the bore of each instrument and by the desire to produce standardized pitches, rather than by an inflexible mathematical equation.

Variation from standardized pitches as defined by western musical theory that is caused by either or both of the two construction methods, *ji nashi* or *to wari*, are frequently not taken into account by *honkyoku* performers who use these instruments. This is not surprising when considered in the light of the other factors contributing to variable pitches, such as the process of the *meri/kari* techniques, the vagueness of the scores, and the variability of pitch resulting from the construction of the blowing edge of the *shakuhachi*. Finally, it should be said that even modern *shakuhachi*, constructed with methods thought by those performers who value standardized pitch to be better than *ji nashi* or *to wari* methods, are still frequently “out of tune”. Variations in pitch which would be unacceptable on instruments used by many western-trained musicians remain prevalent in many *shakuhachi* produced in Japan today.

Another factor which can affect the pitches produced by the instrument, though not the intervals between the pitches, is the overall length of the flute. Although lengths of *shakuhachi*, and consequently the pitches of their fundamental have become somewhat standardized in recent decades, in fact the *shakuhachi* can be made in any length, thereby producing, with all holes closed, a fundamental of any pitch. The name “shakuhachi” itself denotes a standard length, one *shaku* (尺) and “hachi” or eight *sun* (寸, ten *sun* equals one *shaku*). Thus a standard length *shakuhachi*, being always 1.8 *shaku*, should always produce, with all holes closed, a standard fundamental pitch, assuming that other variables such bore dimensions are relatively standard. Today, the linear measurement called a *shaku* is defined as the equivalent to 30.3cm. The 1.8 *shaku*-length instrument of today, that is, the standard length *shakuhachi*, is approximately 54.54cm. and as a result produces, with all holes closed, the fundamental pitch of d’.

The value of the linear measurement called a *shaku*, however, has not remained constant or standard over the centuries. The *shaku* of China during the Tang dynasty, for example, was shorter than the length of the modern day *shaku* (Kamisanō 1974:10). This would explain the relatively short lengths of the Nara period *shakuhachi* preserved in Shōsōin, the longest being only 43.7 cm. and the shortest a mere 34.35 cm.⁷⁶ Even if the length of the standard *shakuhachi*, true to its name, has always been a consistent 1.8 *shaku*, it has not remained a consistent length, because the *shaku* measurement itself has not remained constant. Consequently, the fundamental pitch of the instrument (with all holes closed) has fluctuated accordingly.

⁷⁶ The instruments preserved in the Shōsōin are called *shakuhachi* in the original catalogue made at the time the instruments were donated (see p.63).

For example the Shôshin instruments produce, with all fingerholes closed, fundamental pitches ranging from 449 Hz (a slightly sharp a') to 353 Hz (a slightly sharp f') (Ueno 1984:20), compared with modern *shakuhachi* producing the pitch d'. Therefore, even the fundamental pitch of the *shakuhachi* has fluctuated over the centuries.

In practice, most *honkyoku* can be played on any length *shakuhachi*, that is with any set of pitches. This includes modern, professionally made *shakuhachi* of varying but standardized pitches (that is, “D flutes”, “A flutes”, “B flutes”, “F# flutes”, etc.), as well as historical and “homemade” flutes of non-standard lengths and pitches, e.g., flutes whose lengths are basically randomly determined by the length of the bamboo used. The length of flute chosen and the resultant pitches produced are partly determined by the lineage through which the transmission of *honkyoku* occurs. Players of the many lineages of Kinko *ryû* and of Myôan Taizan *ha* most frequently perform on the 1.8 *shaku* length flute. Longer flutes are especially popular with members of *shakuhachi* lineages other than Kinko *ryû* and Myôan Taizan *ha*, although the exact length of flute is rarely specified by teacher or score. Thus the fundamental pitch of the instrument used to perform *honkyoku* can be determined directly by the medium (in this case the lineage) through which the transmission occurs.

It has been shown above that the physical characteristics of the instrument and the manner in which it has been constructed contribute significantly to the variations in pitch typically found in *honkyoku* performance. A fifth factor that contributes to pitch variations is rooted in certain performance practices which are not in themselves dependent upon the construction of the *shakuhachi*. As mentioned above, these variations occur both as departures from a standard of pitch relationships based on the western system of A-440 Hz and as non-standard relationships or intervals between pitches.

Some *honkyoku* performers argue that the correct production of octaves, fourths, fifths, minor thirds and seconds, etc. is necessary in the performance of *shakuhachi honkyoku*. Yet even amongst those performers, the intervals are not in every case consistent by western standards. For example, Yokoyama (1989a) teaches that the minor second between the pitches d and e-flat (as produced on a 1.8 *shaku* length instrument), an important and frequently occurring interval in almost all *honkyoku*, should be played as a smaller interval than is standard in western music. When asked how much smaller, he replied by saying only that one must go by the “feel” of the interval. He then demonstrated the interval on his *shakuhachi*.

In contrast, other players consistently perform the same interval, that is, a corresponding interval in a corresponding phrase within the same piece but of a different lineage, as much larger, even approaching a major second. For example, Tukitani (1974:24) notes that members of the Myôan Taizan *ha* of *honkyoku* playing consistently perform the same interval as a major second (D to E-natural on a 1.8 *shaku* flute) rather than a small minor second.

All five of the factors of pitch variation discussed thus far, the nature of the *meri/kari* techniques, methods of notating pitch, the nature of instrument construction and the placement of finger holes, the choice of length of instruments and their resultant

fundamental pitch, and variations in the sizes and level of standardization of intervals between pitches are determined in part by the lineage through which *honkyoku* are transmitted.

In addition to the apparently conscious variations in intervalic relationships such as the major and minor seconds, there are variations that are unconscious. For example, the pitch of a diminuendo note sustained over many seconds, of which there are many in all *honkyoku*, has a tendency to descend in time, because more effort and control is needed to maintain a constant pitch as volume is decreased. This is true especially in the upper octave. Also, as is the case with many wind instruments, the pitches of the notes in the upper octave have the tendency to be sharp in relation to those of the lower octave. Though this tendency is caused partly by the dimensions of certain points along the bore, unconscious fluctuations of upper octave notes relative to the lower octave are especially prevalent in *honkyoku* performances because of the nature of the blowing edge. Such fluctuations in pitch relationships, though unintended, are common in *honkyoku* performance even among performers considered to be of very high calibre, for example, Chikuho II (Lee 1986:223).

Finally, in classical *honkyoku*, there is little emphasis on melodic structure, with no implied harmonic background and no “architectonic formal relationships” (see Gutzwiller and Bennett 1991:58). The monophonic nature of *honkyoku* allows for a variability of pitch that might otherwise be unacceptable in an actual or implied harmonic setting. This may help explain the variations in the intervals between pitches that commonly occur between individuals and lineages or schools. Many of these variations are shown in the analysis of “*Reibo*” below (Chapter 6).

In spite of the insignificance placed upon the production of standardized pitch by many members of the *honkyoku* tradition because of the reasons described above, there appear to have always been some *honkyoku* performers who place great importance upon pitch. Examples of these performers are Uramoto, Watazumi and Yokoyama, and their students. The latter two *honkyoku* performers are particularly known for maintaining extremely consistent interval relationships between the pitches being produced (see below, p.[405](#)). Also, some members of Kinko *ryû*, such as Yamaguchi Gorô and Aoki Reibo II perform *honkyoku* within a framework of fairly consistent pitch intervals. In all of the above examples, although pitch is relatively consistent in terms of interval relationships, the intervals themselves do not always agree with the standardized intervals found in the western music tradition. The consistency of intervals is another element of *honkyoku* performance which may be linked to how *honkyoku* is transmitted, in this case the lineage or performer through which the transmission occurs.

In addition to the individual examples above, there is a trend in the *shakuhachi* tradition as a whole toward the standardization of pitch, though this trend is more evident in genres of *shakuhachi* music other than *honkyoku*. This standardization of pitch in the *shakuhachi* tradition in general, partly due to the influence of the high-profile professionals, can also be seen in changes in instrument construction, with makers taking (and buyers demanding) far more care in ensuring that their instruments produce standardized pitches as defined by western musical theory than was deemed necessary even twenty years ago.

In summary, the lack of standard pitch values and interval relationships in much, though not all, *honkyoku* performance appears to be due to both unconscious and conscious factors. What appears in much of the classical *honkyoku* tradition to be a rather ambivalent attitude toward pitch is in marked contrast with the highly evolved and idealized concepts of both tone colour or timbre, as demonstrated earlier, and of rhythm or timing (see below). In nearly every case, the factors which determine the degree of inconsistency of pitch in *honkyoku* performance are themselves influenced by the medium through which *honkyoku* are transmitted.

5.5.3 The Aspect of Rhythm

The *shakuhachi honkyoku* is typically described as having “free rhythmic structure” (Malm 1959:160), or at least “open to a freer interpretation” than other forms of *shakuhachi* music (Blasdel 1988:29). Though *Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians* does not discuss free rhythm, it is defined elsewhere as “employing temporal values not derived from a basic unit” (Apel and Daniel, ed. 1960:248). If one assumes that the “basic unit” equals the “beat” of Western music, that is, “the temporal unit of a composition as represented by the (real or imagined) up-and-down movement of a conductor’s hand” (Apel and Daniel, ed. 1960:29), then it is accurate to describe almost all *honkyoku* as having free rhythm. In the majority of *koten honkyoku*, there is no discernible beat, and no meter.

The lack of any discernible beat in *honkyoku* can be seen in *honkyoku* scores. In many *honkyoku* scores, symbols indicating only very long or very short durations are used (see Figure 13). In many of the scores used by *shakuhachi* players today, for example those of Kinko and Chikuho *ryū*, duration symbols that were developed to notate precisely the duple meter rhythms of ensemble pieces (*gaikyoku*), are also incorporated in *honkyoku* notation (see Figures 14 and 15). The rhythmic symbols however, are either ignored, or, at the very most, used only as a broad guide to the durations of the notes of the piece, particularly in Chikuho *ryū* (Lee 1991:32).

It can be said that every note in each performance of any *honkyoku* has a single, specific temporal value, from which the performer tries not to deviate. This can be illustrated by two concerns of the *honkyoku* performer. With the first concern, the student of *honkyoku* is expected to imitate the teacher’s performance of the piece in every way, including rhythm. During the lesson the advanced student ideally becomes able to anticipate the teacher’s every breath, length of note, and musical nuance, becoming “one” with the teacher in a deeper, more metaphysical sense than is implied by the typical usage of the word “unison” when describing a performance. Furthermore, the student typically does not have the liberty to determine the durations of notes and pauses when playing the piece for the teacher during the lesson, striving instead to reconstruct or imitate the durations of the teacher’s performance.

The rhythmic restriction at this level is only present during the course of a student learning from the teacher. As mentioned previously, the performance of *honkyoku* can transcend strict memorization and repetition of the example provided by the teacher. Implicit in the term *honnin no kyoku* is a performance as unique and non-imitative as the performer himself. The rhythmic determinancy experienced by the student during

the process of learning in the context of a lesson does not exist for a performer who has made that piece “his own”.

There is, however, a second inclination towards rhythmic determinancy besides that seen in the imitative performance of the student. Contrary to the sense of volition implied in the expression “free rhythm” is the term *zettai no ma* (絶対の間, ‘absolute timing’)⁷⁷, used by Yokoyama to express this level of rhythmic restriction. This concept is so important for Yokoyama as to warrant an entire chapter in his book *Shakuhachi gaku no miryoku* 尺八楽の魅力 (*The Fascination of the Shakuhachi*’ 1985:217-225).

For Yokoyama, “absolute timing” means giving each note, pause, ornament, attack, i.e., every musical event in *honkyoku* performance its one, single, correct temporal value. That single right temporal value is determined precisely by the events leading to and following the note, pause, etc., in question. Therefore, to be able to play *honkyoku* with “absolute timing” requires extreme, almost instinctual reflexes and sensitivity. Above all, it requires the performer’s consciousness to be completely focused on the very instant of the the present moment while performing.

Yokoyama uses an analogy of the *samurai* or swordsman of the Japanese warrior class to elaborate on the concept of *zettai no ma*. The analogy is appropriate because during the Edo period all *komusô*, who were the only persons legally allowed to play *shakuhachi*, had to be of *samurai* birth. Thus, technically, until the end of the 19th century, all *shakuhachi* players were *samurai*, even though in reality from at least the 18th century there were common townspeople or *chônin* (町人) playing the instrument (see pp.139-149). Yokoyama describes the idealized *samurai* as having to stake his very life on his ability to perform (with sword rather than *shakuhachi*) with *zettai no ma*. In a sword fight, the person who did not perform with “absolute timing” lost the fight and frequently his life.

The sword-fighter analogy is only one example showing the extraordinary immediacy and heightened awareness of “absolute timing”. A more contemporary example of this might be the experience of a high-speed racing car driver. One’s usual sense of time is suspended with the single-mindedness of the moment; everything is in “slow-motion”. One’s actions become gracefully “perfect” and seemingly automatic, with little element of self-consciousness. Together with this heightened awareness is a calmness resulting from the absolute acceptance of the inevitable outcome.

Yokoyama points out that the word *ma* (間), in the expression *zettai no ma*, is used in many expressions and set phrases in the Japanese language, and denotes space as well as time. *Zettai no ma* thus means ‘absolute space’ or ‘absolute interval’ as well as ‘absolute timing’. The *samurai* also had to judge absolutely the distance or spacing between one’s sword and that of one’s opponent. Likewise, the *honkyoku* player must create the exact appropriate spaces or pauses between phrases or notes when these occur. The importance of space or *ma* is not unique to *shakuhachi honkyoku*, but is

⁷⁷ Nakatsuka (1979:377) uses a similar term, *zettai ongaku* (絶対音楽, ‘absolute music’) to distinguish *honkyoku* from “ordinary worldly music”.

evident in much of Japanese culture, from large amounts of blank space in brush painting or long pauses during which the actors do not move in Noh drama, to large areas of raked pebbles in traditional gardens devoid of plants and long moments of silence during which actors in many Japanese films do not speak. The notion of *ma* is one of the most pervasive and important concepts of Japanese art.

Because the phrase is the single most important divisive unit in *honkyoku*, the pauses between phrases are particularly important. Breaths are taken only during these pauses, so that every phrase is only one breath's length. In most music for wind instruments employing temporal values derived from a basic unit, the timing of the performer's breathing is determined by the melody. Ideally, one inhales where there are rests in the music, but frequently one is forced to inhale in the most appropriate places in the music, and in the time there is between the notes at those places. The player must learn to snatch breaths as quickly as possible in those cases. At times the breathing is automatic, with the performer's consciousness completely on the "music", the sound as well as the beat.

In contrast, the timing of the breaths in *honkyoku* are not subservient to the sound element of the music. All phrases in *koten honkyoku* must be performed in a single breath. The breathing always occurs between the phrases. As there is no set rhythmic pulse or beat to adhere to, the breaths between each phrase need not fit within a set space or time. In fact, the time allowed for taking any given breath is in a sense predetermined by the preceding and subsequent phrases under the concept of *zettai no ma*. But conversely, the phrases themselves are just as predetermined by the breath taken between them. The breath, the space between the notes, is as important as the notes themselves in *honkyoku*. This is all the more true because the process of performing *honkyoku* is more important than the product. Breathing in the air needed to play a phrase is as much part of the process of performing as producing the sounds that make up the phrase. As will be shown in the analysis of "*Reibo*", variations in the placement and number of phrases occur among all ten transcribed performances. Variations in phrasing are found even between the performances most similar in other respects, those by Jin and Sakai (see p.[386](#)).

Zettai no ma is not a single, rigid ideal, a one "True" and unchanging way of performing *honkyoku*. Instead, it is a fluid ideal, differing with each performance. There may be one single right timing for every single event in any given performance. But the "absolute timing" of any single event in *honkyoku* performance is determined by what has occurred prior to and what will occur following the event. Since these elements differ to a certain degree with every performer and performance, the "absolute timing" that is determined by them will differ as well. Because of the interconnection between all of the events in *honkyoku* performance, it follows that how the performer takes his initial breath immediately prior to playing the very first note of the piece determines the "absolute timing" of the entire performance, including, for example, the length of the very last note of the piece. *Zettai no ma* is absolute, but only for one performer accomplishing a single performance at a specific time.

Herein lies the reconciliation between the two concepts *honnin no kyoku* with its implication of individuality, and *zettai no ma* and its seemingly contrasting concept of the "absolute". In fact, only by making *honkyoku* "his own" for that particular

performance is it possible for the performer to play with “absolute timing”. Both are manifestations of enlightened awareness. As Yokoyama (1985:222) rightly points out, *zettai no ma* is worthy of even more than a lifetime of practice.

5.6 Ideologies of Transmission

The four elements of transmission discussed above, lineages, lessons, notation, and performance all address the question of how transmission takes place in the *honkyoku* tradition, just as the preceding sections in this chapter addressed the question of what is being transmitted by looking at concepts of subjectivity and objectivity, theories of orality, and the relationship between performance and documents. Both the “what” and the “how” of *honkyoku* transmission are influenced by and in turn influence each other. The interaction between these two components can be approached via the ideologies held by members of the tradition regarding transmission. The following discussion compares the views of three prominent *shakuhachi* teachers about transmission as espoused in verbal and written communications. They are a representative sample of the full spectrum of beliefs that exists in the *honkyoku* tradition. It will be shown that what these teachers believe is being transmitted in *honkyoku* affects how they endeavour to accomplish the transmission and that how they transmit *honkyoku* affects what is transmitted.

5.6.1 The Ideology of *Honkyoku* as Sacred Object

The first set of doctrines or way of thinking with regards to the “what” and “how” of *honkyoku* transmission views *honkyoku* as sacred objects that can be defined and owned, and whose transmission can be physically and psychologically controlled. This ideology is held by Inoue Shōei (井上照影, ne.Shigeshi 重志, b.1922). Inoue, a *shakuhachi* teacher in Tōkyō, claims to be the *iemoto* (家元, head of a *shakuhachi* sect or lineage, usually hereditarily or bureaucratically decided) of the originally Aomori based Kimpū ryū (錦風流), having inherited the school in 1960 from Narita Shōei (成田松影). This claim is questionable, as Inoue’s name does not appear in the lineage charts for Kimpū ryū of either Tukitani (in NOD 1989:46) or Yamaue (1984:169), nor is he mentioned in a book devoted to Kimpū ryū (Uchiyama 1973). Kudo (1977:20) does list, however, Inoue as head of Kōun kai (江雲会), a sub-branch of the famous Kawase lineage of Kinko ryū. This sub-branch of Kinko ryū was founded by Inoue’s father, Inoue Shigemi (井上重美, 1890-1952). In any case, it is not as leader of a little known, but independent sub-branch of the Kinko ryū, but rather as *iemoto* of the quite famous Kimpū ryū that Inoue would like to be known.

As proof of his authority as *iemoto*, Inoue possesses a *shakuhachi* instrument that he claims is the symbol of authority in Kimpū ryū. Like the cloak given by the Zen master to the one student who had received transmission of the true Dharma as a symbol of that transmission—only *iemoto* of Kimpū ryū could possess the

instrument.⁷⁸ Inoue claims that he received this particular instrument when he became *iemoto* on 22 November 1960.

Inoue believes that his being *iemoto* of Kimpû *ryû* means, among other things, that his performance of the Kimpû pieces are the most correct of any *shakuhachi* player, that is, that his performances are the least altered and closest to the performances of the founder of the lineage, Nyui Getsue (乳井月影). Furthermore, as *iemoto*, Inoue believes he has a responsibility to preserve the Kimpû repertoire by transmitting it with as little change as possible. One of the ways available to him to accomplish this is being able to choose his successor. The student who will become the next *iemoto* of Kimpû *ryû* is, according to Inoue the one who can perform the pieces of the school with what Inoue perceives to be as little variation and change as possible.

Consistent with the high value Inoue placed on his authority as *iemoto*, and on the unchanged purity that he claimed his performance had, was his low opinion of other performers of *shakuhachi honkyoku*. In Inoue's opinion, almost all of the well-known *shakuhachi* players, both living and dead, either were not recipients of the *honkyoku* tradition, or if they had in fact received the *honkyoku* tradition, did not faithfully transmit the tradition as they had received it. They did not know how to perform *honkyoku* in the "true spirit" of the tradition, even if they were technically very proficient. In fact their technical proficiency more often than not made it more difficult for them to perform *honkyoku* correctly. Inoue also told this non-Japanese author that *gaijin* (pejorative term for non-Japanese) could never really learn to play *honkyoku* because they were not Japanese and did not have the heart or spirit (*kokoro* 心) of the Japanese, which was essential if one were to perform *honkyoku* correctly.

Although Inoue and his lineage is not the subject of this thesis, a comparative analysis of transcriptions of *honkyoku* performances of Inoue's teacher, Inoue himself, and his students would most likely show far less variation and change than can be seen in other lineages where "purity" of *honkyoku* performance is not such an important issue (see the analysis of such lineages in Chapter 6). At the same time, it is probable that far more variation and change has occurred in Inoue's lineage than he would like to admit.

For Inoue, the possession of the heirloom *shakuhachi* instrument as an "unchanging" material object of transmission, is both necessary for and perfectly suited to his concept of *honkyoku* and how *honkyoku* should be transmitted. The instrument symbolizes both the successful transmission of the *honkyoku* repertoire from his predecessor to himself, as well as the authority and responsibility he has as *iemoto* to define and preserve the authenticity of that repertoire. But more than that, the instrument, a concrete physical object, symbolizes the nature of his repertoire as well.

In Inoue's mind, *honkyoku* appears to be an unchanging object which, like the bamboo instrument, has an existence independent of himself and his students. Because of this, Inoue may view his task as trying to preserve his repertoire of unchanging *honkyoku*, just as he must preserve the old bamboo flute. The process of

⁷⁸ Inoue appears to ignore the entire Zen story about the cloak, which makes clear that both the Dharma and its transmission have nothing to do with the cloak (see Aitken 1990:147-154).

transmitting his repertoire would to him be equivalent to the act of transmitting the *shakuhachi* instrument itself. For Inoue, his repertoire is an object being passed or transmitted from himself to his students in a manner that presupposes the repertoire having some sort of existence independent of himself and his students.

He also believes that he is capable of transmitting the repertoire with completely transparent communication.

Inoue (n.d.:194) has written that having inherited Kimpû *ryû* from Narita Shôei, the two discussed many things concerning the sect. Two of the most important issues discussed, according to Inoue were: 1) the use of *shakuhachi* instruments that are two *shaku* in length when performing Kimpû pieces; and 2) that all heirs to the position of head of the Kimpû school use the character 影 (*ei*) in their name.

Finally, just as there is only the one heirloom *shakuhachi* invested with the authority of *iemoto*, there also can only be a single “right” way to perform *honkyoku*. Thus, there is some logic in Inoue believing that just as he is the only *shakuhachi* player to possess the heirloom *shakuhachi*, he is likewise the only *shakuhachi* player who can perform correctly the *honkyoku* of his lineage. Having convinced himself of that, it is a small mental step to the belief that not only can the *honkyoku* repertoire of his lineage be performed correctly by himself alone, but also that only he himself can truly perform *honkyoku* of any lineage correctly.

5.6.2 The Ideology of *Honkyoku* as Music

Another ideological position within the *shakuhachi* tradition regarding the transmission of *honkyoku* is held by Aoki Reibo II. Aoki Reibo is head of *Reibo kai* (鈴慕会, ‘*Reibo Society*’), a sub-school of Kinko *ryû*, which descended from Kawase Junsuke I, and therefore is of the same lineage as Inoue; the fathers of both Aoki and Inoue were students of Junsuke I. There are a number of major differences between Aoki and Inoue and their ways of thinking.

Aoki’s organization, *Reibo kai*, is similar to Inoue’s *Kôun kai*, being an independent lineage within Kinko *ryû*. Its administration and finances are completely separate from other organizations classed under the umbrella term, Kinko *ryû*. Thus, Aoki Reibo, as head of *Reibo kai*, in effect has the authority of *iemoto*, like that claimed by Inoue. Despite this Aoki is quick to state that he is not *iemoto* and in fact is against the whole *iemoto* system. What Aoki means by this can be seen in the way his concept of authority differs from Inoue’s.

Aoki believes that performers of *shakuhachi honkyoku* have no more claim to spirituality than any other musicians who perform in public. In his opinion, many *shakuhachi* performers who stress the connection between *honkyoku* and Zen Buddhism are little more than spiritual charlatans.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Aoki was quite adamant in expressing these opinions during his interview with me. One reason for his doing so may have been my having unfortunately begun the interview by

What Inoue and Aoki have in common are their ideas about their authority as a teacher and transmitter of *honkyoku*. As with Inoue, Aoki believes that his students must perform *honkyoku* exactly as he teaches them. Aoki thus considers himself to be the absolute authority on *honkyoku* in his lineage. His students must accept this authority unconditionally without question. Aoki does not see the ultimate basis for his absolute authority as something outside himself, which had been invested in him by someone else, as in the case of Inoue and his heirloom *shakuhachi*. Aoki has no need for such symbols.

The reason Aoki demands complete authority over his students and the manner in which they perform *honkyoku* is, in his own words, because none of his students has ever even vaguely approached his ability and virtuosity as a *shakuhachi* performer, and none are likely to do so. Theoretically, if a student were to become truly better than Aoki, then the latter's authority would no longer be valid over that student. In Aoki's opinion, it is highly unlikely that such a student might materialize in the future. Because it is Aoki's own subjective judgment that determines who is "better" than whom, he is probably right.

Unlike Inoue's authority, which is absolute until such time as he decides to bestow it onto his successor, Aoki's authority is limited by his own level of performance, and may be challenged at any time. Thus, for Aoki, *honkyoku* is not perceived as an unchanging, sacrosanct "object" that should not be modified or reinterpreted, and it is not the responsibility of the *iemoto* to transmit it in its purest "original" form. Instead and in contrast with Inoue, Aoki believes that *honkyoku*, as transmitted by his lineage, is a repertoire of music that might indeed change over time, depending upon the interpretation of the "best" performer, that is, the one in the position of authority.

Such changes cannot, however, be made by just any performer. A performer may interpret *honkyoku* in his own way only if he has the authority to do so by virtue of his superior level of performing ability. Otherwise, *shakuhachi* players in Aoki's lineage must perform *honkyoku* exactly as they were taught the piece.

It is interesting to note that Aoki had no desire to discuss the seeming inevitability of appointing a successor to his position of authority prior to his own retirement, nor the process in which such an appointment might take place. It is possible that Aoki could refuse to relinquish his authority to anyone. If that were to happen, the students of Aoki might codify his performances into inviolate "objects" invested with their own authority, which would then be transmitted in the same manner and context as the *honkyoku* repertoire of Inoue.

It should be noted that Aoki, and his teacher and father, Aoki Reibo I, operated almost entirely within the context of Kinko *ryû*. Though administrating their own independent organization within Kinko *ryû*, all of their classical *honkyoku* but for a few exceptions, are from the Kinko lineage. The Kinko *honkyoku* repertoire, which numbers thirty-nine pieces in all, has for the most part been codified since the time of Kinko I in the 18th century, earlier than that of any other existing lineage (Tukitani et al. 1991:34). Inoue's lineage, Kimpû *ryû*, although completely separate from any and

stating that the topic of my thesis was in part the connection between classical *honkyoku* and Zen Buddhism.

all independent sub-schools of Kinko *ryû*, traces itself back to Kurihara Kimpû (栗原錦風), a high ranking member of the Kinko lineage during the mid-1700s (Inoue n.d.:194), and thus shares much in common with such organizations as Aoki's *Reibo kai*.

Kinko *honkyoku* in Kinko notation are generally far more detailed and precise in performance prescription than are non-Kinko *honkyoku* scores used by *shakuhachi* players who are not associated with Kinko *ryû*. Furthermore, notation appears to have been used in the transmission of Kinko *honkyoku* since at least the early 1800s (HHJ 1984:1106; NOD 1989:332; Syakuhati Kenkyûkai 1990:5), while the *Reibo* pieces of the *Ôshû* lineage, for example, were transmitted without the use of notation at least until the 1940s (Yamaue 1986:8).⁸⁰ Thus, Tukitani can assert that the Kinko *ryû* piece “*Kokû reibo*” has been transmitted relatively unchanged since Kinko I codified it in the 18th century (Tukitani et al. 1991:34). Any modification or reinterpretation of Kinko *honkyoku* that Aoki or his successor might undertake would tend to be minor if compared with the variation and change that can be seen in *honkyoku* that have been transmitted outside the Kinko tradition.

5.6.3 The Ideology of *Honkyoku* as Transcending “Object” and “Music”

As stated above, the ideologies of the above two *shakuhachi* players suggest relatively little variation and change during the process of transmission within their lineage, although there is no conclusive data to support this, as neither of the two lineages is represented in the analysis. The *shakuhachi* players whose performances are analyzed in Chapter 6⁸¹ appear to share, in varying degrees, a third way of viewing the transmission of *honkyoku*. The ideology held by these performers can be seen in their beliefs and actions, especially those of Yokoyama and Watazumi.

Both Uramoto Setchô and Jin Nyôdo are representative of the era of *shakuhachi* players before bureaucratic organizations such as those of Inoue and Aoki became as pervasive as they are in Japan today. Both players learned pieces from a number of teachers, though Uramoto (1985:10) primarily credits Konashi Kinsui as his teacher. The multifarious influences of their numerous teachers may help to explain the variation between their performances of “*Futaiken reibo*”, even though, according to the genealogy chart, they both learned the piece from Konashi (see pp.398-403). Uramoto did not create an organized *shakuhachi* lineage such as those of Inoue and Aoki, although one can argue that an unorganized lineage of his *honkyoku* performance continues to exist through his numerous students. Uramoto has expressed his belief in the unlimited nature of *honkyoku* in a way that would seem incompatible with both Inoue's ideology of *honkyoku* as object and Aoki's ideology of *honkyoku* as music (see pp.288-295).

⁸⁰ The transmission of “*Reibo*” having taken place without notation until the 1940s has profound implications for the types and the degree of variation found between performances of the piece. The analysis presented in Chapter 6 will show a number of prominent features of the “*Reibo*” performances which are characteristic of music transmitted orally.

⁸¹ These are Uramoto Setchô, Jin Nyodô, Sakai Chikuhô, Watazumi dôsô, Yokoyama Katsuya, and Iwamoto Yoshikazu.

Jin's lineage likewise exists largely outside of any single organization, though his son, Jin Nyosei (神如正) is head of his official organization. For example, much of Jin's *honkyoku*, which was learned from many individuals, was transmitted and continues to be performed by members of the organizations of Kurahashi (in Kyôto) (see p.[10](#)) and Sakai. His ideas concerning *honkyoku* clearly had elements of spirituality as transmitted by *komusô* of previous generations (see Jin 1980).

An indirect recipient of Jin's *honkyoku* is Sakai Chikuho II. Though Chikuho II inherited the title of *iemoto* of Chikuho *ryû* from his father, the manner in which he received his *honkyoku* and his ideas regarding *honkyoku* transmission differ considerably from those of Inoue and Aoki. His initial and primary teacher was his father, Chikuho I, but he learned many *honkyoku* in his repertoire from other teachers such as Moriyasu, one of Jin's students. Sakai learned both "*Futaiken reibo*" and "*Shôganken reibo*" from Moriyasu.

Sakai considered his performance of *honkyoku* repertoire as only one of many manifestations of the pieces, and in most cases was open to discussion of how certain pieces had been transmitted through certain people before becoming Chikuho pieces. Unlike both Inoue and Aoki, he had no objections to his students going off to study with *shakuhachi* performers of different lineages. It appears that he attempted to consciously imbue his *honkyoku* performances with a quality uniquely characteristic of Chikuho *ryû*, so much so that his brother Shôdô later publicly rejected his interpretations and scores as being unauthentic (see p.[241](#)). In spite of Chikuho's attempts to make his *honkyoku* unique and of Shôdô's subsequent objections, the degree of similarity between the "*Reibo*" performances of Jin and Sakai is among the highest among the ten performances analyzed (see pp.[385-387](#)), even though Sakai was one generation removed from Jin.

Yokoyama Katsuya is the head and founder of his own *shakuhachi* organization, Chikushin *kai* (竹心会, 'The Society of the Spirit of Bamboo'). Unlike Inoue and Aoki, Yokoyama has no claim to leadership of a lineage directly descending from a major recipient of Kurosawa Kinko's transmission of his *honkyoku* repertoire, although both his father and grandfather were fairly high ranking *shakuhachi* teachers. His father was also a highly acclaimed maker of *shakuhachi*.

As with Aoki, Yokoyama is a noted performer both in Japan and overseas, claiming to have performed in more foreign countries and on more occasions abroad than any other *shakuhachi* player in history. He also has made many recordings, especially of *honkyoku*. Unlike both Inoue and Aoki, three persons are publicly known to have been his *shakuhachi* teachers.⁸² Furthermore, the three teachers represent completely different lineages. In the light of what has been observed regarding the effects lineage has on the transmission of elements of *honkyoku* such as pitch and rhythm (see above, pp.[271-287](#)), this has surely influenced the nature of Yokoyama's performance. The relationship between lineage and performance will be demonstrated repeatedly in the analysis (pp.[376-418](#)).

⁸² There is strong evidence that Aoki has learned at least one *honkyoku* from persons other than his publically acknowledged teacher, his father Aoki Reibo I, but he does not publicly admit to this (p.[194](#)).

Yokoyama's father, Yokoyama Rampo (横山蘭畝), belonged to the Kinko style of *shakuhachi* playing. Yokoyama's second teacher, Fukuda Randô (福田蘭童), a composer of music for *shakuhachi* and other instruments, played in the Azuma *ryû* style. Finally, Watazumi dôso (海童道祖) performs *honkyoku* originating from many different lineages but in his own unique style. As was seen in cases of Uramoto and Jin, the numerous sources of formal transmission represented in Yokoyama's playing reflect the transmission practices of the 19th century and earlier, when wandering *komusô* would teach and learn *honkyoku* to and from numerous other *komusô* from various districts throughout Japan. It will be shown in the analysis (Chapter 6) that these transmission practices continue to be reflected in the tradition by the multifarious variations between performances.

It is therefore not surprising that Yokoyama is eclectic in his view of *honkyoku*, and the manner in which it should be transmitted. Yokoyama believes that *honkyoku* constantly change as they are transmitted from one generation to the next. He has told me during lessons what he says is an old Japanese adage: that the art of the student is usually fifty percent of that of his teacher, with the other fifty percent presumed to be lost in the transmission. While this may reflect reality in many if not most cases, Yokoyama points out that if this were true all of the time, the tradition would soon die out, which has not happened with many traditional arts, including that of *shakuhachi honkyoku*. That these arts still flourish indicates that sometimes at least one hundred percent of the tradition is transmitted. But even that would not be enough for an art to survive, if so much is usually lost with each transmission between generations.

Yokoyama therefore believes that periodically, one hundred and fifty percent or even two and three hundred percent of the traditional art is transmitted from teacher to student. In other words, occasionally a student will far surpass the art of his teacher, elevating the art to a level much higher than the teacher had achieved, and possibly even higher than had been achieved in many generations.

If the transmission of *honkyoku* were portrayed on a graph with the horizontal axis being transmissions over numerous generations and the vertical axis showing the level of the art, then Yokoyama believes that the line on the graph would generally be sloping downward, with occasional sharp jumps of varying degrees upward in such a way that the overall average level of the art stayed basically the same.

Though Yokoyama does not define what exactly the "level of the art" is regarding *honkyoku*, he does state that it cannot be thought of as merely the summation of all of the individual musical elements such as pitch, timing, tone colour, etc., which are usually thought of as constituting the pieces, because these individual elements inevitably change with each transmission. Rather, it includes all of these elements, yet transcends the sum of these elements. Yokoyama's concept of the level of the art of *shakuhachi honkyoku* may be similar to the indefinable "inner core" or "real essence" mentioned earlier upon which Hisamatsu urged students of *shakuhachi* to concentrate.

For Yokoyama, it is not important that his students play *honkyoku* exactly as he does; it is in fact impossible for them to do so. What is important is for his students to try to elevate the level of the art of playing *shakuhachi honkyoku* above that of their

teacher.⁸³ He believes that his own teacher, Watazumi achieved this, and is himself striving to do the same. While Aoki acknowledges the possibility of a student surpassing his own art, Yokoyama actively encourages it. Furthermore, Aoki spoke of his art only in terms of musicianship, while Yokoyama suggests another dimension to the *honkyoku* tradition, which is indefinable and inexplicable.

In contrast to both Inoue and Aoki, Yokoyama believes that in the case of *shakuhachi honkyoku*, authority rests ultimately with each individual player. Yokoyama does not think of *honkyoku* as something that can be owned. Likewise, neither he nor anyone can have the authority to determine authenticity. In fact, for Yokoyama, neither authority nor authenticity is an issue when performing and transmitting *honkyoku*. With Yokoyama, there is no object of authority, such as Inoue's heirloom *shakuhachi* instrument, and no demands upon his students to imitate his performances exactly, as is the case with both Inoue and Aoki.

Of the twenty or thirty pieces that he learned from Watazumi, Yokoyama claims to have deliberately changed only one piece. Watazumi played the piece *Tamuke* in a very light and lively manner, as a *min'yō* (folksong) might be played. Yokoyama could not bring himself to play it that way, and so changed his way of playing it to a slow, solemn tempo and style. Yokoyama did not purposely change the way of performing any of the other pieces taught him by Watazumi, but says that changes have occurred nonetheless. According to Yokoyama, the reason for these changes is because Yokoyama did not have the capability to perform the pieces as Watazumi played them.

To aid in the formidable task of transmitting *honkyoku*, Yokoyama uses scores of traditional notation as one tool of transmission. In contrast to most *shakuhachi* teachers, Yokoyama does not offer neatly written and published scores of *honkyoku* he teaches. His teacher Watazumi used an extremely skeletal form of the *fu ho u* (フホウ) notation system. Because in most cases Yokoyama's students would find it took too long to learn the *fu ho u* system, most of the scores used are written in Kinko notation, and are more descriptive than the bare bones of Watazumi's scores.

Yokoyama does not publish scores because of the impossibility of creating a finished score to his satisfaction. Scores can only be "memos" of *honkyoku* itself. Over the past twenty years or so, he has continually revised the scores of *honkyoku* in his repertoire. The revision takes on a cyclical form. First more detail is added to describe the piece. Then, realizing that the added detail does not accurately represent the piece either, the score is simplified again. The process continues even today, though usually it is his students who try their hand at notating a piece. In this respect, Yokoyama concurs with Uramoto's opinion that too much emphasis placed on notation will inevitably limit *honkyoku* (see p.225).

For Yokoyama, the issue of succession, apparently so prominent in the minds of both Inoue and Aoki, does not even arise. It is as if there is really nothing to succeed to in Yokoyama's mind. There are only *honkyoku* to transmit, however imperfectly or perfectly. The *honkyoku* as transmitted by Yokoyama experience constant outward

⁸³ One of Yokoyama's teachers, Watazumi, takes this concept much further, by completely repudiating the notion that he ever had a teacher. See below, p.302.

change, whether by will or unconsciously, by genius or by inadequacy. Simultaneously, the essence of *honkyoku* as transmitted by Yokoyama transcends the change to which objects or music are subject.

The fifth performer represented in the analysis of “*Reibo*”, Iwamoto Yoshikazu, is one of Yokoyama’s early students. He was one of Yokoyama’s first students to become a professional *shakuhachi* player, and has spent much of his career in England. His self-imposed separation from his teacher and the *shakuhachi* tradition would indicate a disregard for issues such as succession and lineage. It will be shown in the analysis that Iwamoto’s performance of “*Reibo*” reflects his isolation in England in its relationship to both Yokoyama’s and Watazumi’s performances (see p.[396](#)).

The sixth and final *shakuhachi* player represented in the following analysis of ten performances of “*Reibo*” is one of Yokoyama’s teachers, Watazumi dôsô. Watazumi’s ideology, though related to those of the other five performers represented in the analysis, is the most exceptional. It will be shown in the analyses that Watazumi’s singular ideology is manifestly evident in his performance of “*Reibo*”, which is the most dissimilar among the ten performances.

In contrast to Inoue and Aoki, Watazumi does not acknowledge belonging to any lineage. Furthermore, unlike any of the above-mentioned performers, including Yokoyama, Watazumi does not even acknowledge any individual as his teacher, as the original source of his *honkyoku* repertoire or his performance practices and techniques. This is so even though it is common knowledge, according to Yokoyama, that he did learn pieces from such noted players as Uramoto Setcho.

Yokoyama conjectures that Watazumi claims to have had no teacher because he feels that compared with what Watazumi himself added to the performance of his pieces, what he may have learned initially from others is so trivial as to not warrant acknowledgment.⁸⁴ Watazumi deals with the problem of authenticity in his usual inimitable fashion by declaring that he has no teachers and no lineage and therefore no problem of authenticity (Yokoyama 1989a). In this assertion may be found the explanation of Watazumi calling what appears to be a close variant of Jin’s “*Shôganken reibo*” by the unique name “*Furin*” (see p.[417](#)).

Watazumi pursues this third ideology of transmission much farther than Yokoyama. Unlike Yokoyama, who calls his instrument *shakuhachi* and the pieces he plays *koten honkyoku*, Watazumi goes so far in repudiating the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition as to say that he does not play an instrument called *shakuhachi*. Rather he plays *hochiku* (法竹, ‘*dharma* bamboo’). The pieces he performs are not *honkyoku*, but *dôkyoku* (道曲, ‘pieces of the Way’).

Watazumi’s actions and motivations may be partially explained by a quote by a member of a tradition far more conservative than the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition, that of Nô drama. The highly respected Nô actor Kanze Hideo has said:

⁸⁴ See pp.[317-318](#) for another explanation for Watazumi’s repudiation of his teachers.

In Noh, it is considered crucially important to preserve tradition.... In my opinion nothing happens unless you are creating new things.....I don't believe tradition is something you preserve. If Noh has a tradition at all, it is the tradition of life through the ages. I'll be damned if I'm going to devote myself to protecting somebody else's mouldy...notion of what Noh was centuries ago.

(In 'Noh, Business and Art', "The Drama Review", Spring 1981)

Like Yokoyama and in extreme contrast to Inoue and Aoki, the issue of succession does not exist for Watazumi. Watazumi, according to Yokoyama, is one of those players who, every several hundred years or so, comes forth to elevate the *honkyoku* tradition to such a high degree compared with those players who lived during or immediately prior to his time that he might be considered to have completely renewed the tradition, if not having created it anew. Watazumi would most likely object to Yokoyama's description, since he does not consider himself a member of the *honkyoku* tradition and there is in any case, nothing to elevate or renew. In contrast to Yokoyama, it is reasonable to imagine that Watazumi might assert that, as there is no *honkyoku*, there is no "essence" of *honkyoku*, and nothing to transmit, much less to change during transmission.

CHAPTER 6

AN ANALYSIS OF *SHAKUHACHI HONKYOKU*

One of the intentions of this thesis is to find ways of looking at the transmission of the *honkyoku* tradition that are valid from a musicological perspective as well as being in tune with the tradition in an “emic” sense, that is, in a way that is tradition-based. With this in mind, issues concerning the transmission of the *honkyoku* “*Reibo*” of the Ôshû lineage are examined through the simultaneous application of two analytical methods to transcriptions of recordings of ten performances.

The first method is as follows: detailed transcriptions are made of ten performances of pieces that oral histories and genealogies suggest are versions of the piece “*Reibo*”; an orthographically simplified transcription is made so that the melodic contour of one performance can be compared with melodic contours of the other performances. It will be demonstrated from these comparisons that the pieces chosen for analysis are indeed versions of the same piece. It will also be shown that the lines of transmission of the pieces indicated by sources such as oral histories and genealogies are confirmed by the patterns of similarities and differences that arise from the comparison. At this stage, the formal structures and melodic formulae of *honkyoku* become observable. This method, which relies upon musicological analytical, or “etic” concepts for its departure point can only be successful if achieved nonetheless through a tradition-based approach.

The second method of inquiry used in this thesis is completely different from the first in that it draws upon traditional ways of analyzing *honkyoku*. It was conceived by observing how people within the tradition talk and write about *honkyoku* in an analytical way, in particular during lessons and in various written accounts. In contrast to the large scale structures and melodic formulae highlighted by the first method, this method deals primarily with small and frequently subtle details. Details of this kind are, to performers of *honkyoku*, the major issue discussed in the course of transmission; an examination of such details in performances of the “*Reibo*” pieces contributes insights into how insiders to the tradition view the music, and show what elements are likely to be or not be transmitted from performer to performer.

Both the fundamentally musicological “etic” approach and the detailed, tradition-based, more “emic” approach used in this thesis rely largely upon data derived from the transcriptions of performances of “*Reibo*” pieces by various performers. Philosophical and technical problems arising both from the transcription of *honkyoku* and from the above two analytical approaches are discussed below.

6.1 Musicological Approaches to Honkyoku Analysis

In the following discussion, I will distinguish between formal analyses, by which I mean analyses that use musicological methods and look primarily at the form or structure of the music, and informal analyses, by which I mean analyses that use traditional methods to examine detailed features of the music that most concern the

members of the tradition. I will first deal with formal analyses, and then discuss informal analyses.

Among the limited number of transcriptions and formal analyses of *honkyoku*—as distinct from the informal process-oriented analyses made by members of the tradition and described below—that exist in the literature, the overwhelming majority are by non-Japanese scholars in sources written in languages other than Japanese. To my knowledge, Tukitani is the only musicologist writing in Japanese to have extensively transcribed *honkyoku* pieces, though most of these transcriptions remain unpublished.⁸⁵ She has also used data from transcriptions in analyzing large-scale structures of *honkyoku* and examining hierarchies of pitches as related to theoretical scales.⁸⁶ Since the mid-1970s, however, Tukitani's attention has shifted from transcription-based formal analysis of *honkyoku*, to other issues such as genealogies of performers and lineages of pieces. This appears to indicate a shift of interest from the study of structural elements of the music itself to aspects of transmission of more concern to the *honkyoku* tradition. There are no other examples, to my knowledge of transcriptions of *honkyoku* performances being made or used as data for analysis by and for members of the *honkyoku* tradition.

One reason for the relative lack of interest on the part of *shakuhachi* performers in formal analysis of the *honkyoku* is the emphasis placed upon the “process” or act of performance in the present moment. If one's attention is constantly focused on the here and now of performing a piece, formal structures become relatively unimportant. Thus large scale structural forms are of little interest to *honkyoku* performers.

Marett (1992) has suggested an analogy to this in Zen practice. The chanting of sutras are an integral part of Zen practice. These sutras have semantic structure; their words are profoundly meaningful. Yet during the rhythmical chanting of the Heart Sutra during a week long *sesshin* or retreat for example, the consciousness of the chanter tends to focus down to the level of each individual syllable of the chant. The syntax of the sentences and even the meanings of the words in the sutra may on that level, be lost in a way similar to what happens to formal structure in the mind of a *honkyoku* player during performance.

Another example of emphasizing the present moment can be seen in the Zen practice of breath counting during *zazen* (座禅, ‘seated meditation’). Breath counting is the practice of counting “one” for the inhalation, “two” for the exhalation, “three” for the next inhalation, etc., until reaching “ten” on the exhalation. The subsequent inhalation is then counted as “one” again and the entire process repeated. In breath counting, the formal structure is clearly the repetition of “1, 2, 3, 4...10”. But as Aitken (1982:11, 24) explains, “you must devote all your attention just to ‘one’, just to ‘two’.... Become each point, each number in the sequence of counting. You and the count and the breath are all of a piece in *this* moment. Invest yourself in each number. There is only ‘one’ in the whole universe, only ‘two’ in the whole universe, just that single point”.

⁸⁵ In 1989, when I asked about transcriptions of *honkyoku*, Tukitani showed me several binders full of transcriptions that she had done during her university days, under the tutelage of the late Koizumi Fumio. Though Tukitani appears to use data derived from these transcriptions, she has rarely discussed or included transcriptions in her recent publications.

⁸⁶ For a more detailed discussion of Tukitani's work, see below (pp. [316-319](#)).

The formal structure of breath counting falls into the background, evaporating into a universe of “just ‘one’, just ‘two’”.

This is not to imply that in traditional *honkyoku*, structures cannot be perceived. Contrary to Gutzwiller’s insistence that “it is extremely difficult to observe higher order formal structure in the pieces of *honkyoku*” (Gutzwiller and Bennett 1991:58), there are a number of *honkyoku* with readily observable formal structure. A prime example of this is the piece “*Kyorei*” (虚鈴, ‘Empty Bell’) as transmitted through the Myôan and Chikuho lineages. The overall structure of the piece, as indicated by an analysis of the score, is A - A', with A' being a slight variation of A, but played in the upper octave. Both A and A' have a musical contour which starts on the pitch G (when played on a 1.8 *shaku* instrument), climaxes on the pitch D above the starting pitch G, and ends on the pitch D below the starting pitch G. Figure 16 presents the score of “*Kyorei*” as transmitted in Chikuho *ryû*, transnotated from the traditional *shakuhachi* notation into staff notation and annotated to show the structures discussed above. Examples of other *honkyoku* which exhibit easily recognizable structural forms include “*San'an*” (産安, ‘Safe Delivery’), and the Myôan version “*Honte chôshi*” (本手調子, ‘Original Fingering Searching’).⁸⁷

There is also in *honkyoku* a process of structuring through patterned repetition of particular techniques. For example, in the piece “*Ajikan*” (阿字観, ‘Seeing the Letter “Ah”’), the process of performing a number of *yuri* techniques (various playing techniques which produce a variety of pitch oscillations) is repeated throughout the piece. The *yuri* technique is thus a defining and unifying feature of the piece. The final phrase of the piece is sometimes played with an extended *yuri* technique, completing the unifying process. As will be shown below, formal structure can also be observed in the Ôshû family of “*Reibo*” pieces (see pp. [360-365](#)).

Despite the existence of formal structures in *honkyoku*, however, they are nonetheless given little attention by members of the tradition. Gutzwiller is accurate in stating that “In Japanese traditional music the essence of music is not an abstract structure whose beauty could be understood even without playing the music at all, but it is the performance, the way music is played” (1974:88), and that “We may therefore expect that ‘structure’ occupies a different place in the mind of a Japanese musician than it does in the case of his Western counterpart” (1974:87).

This should not be taken to mean that structure has no place at all in the Japanese musician’s mind, or that formal structure cannot be observed in *honkyoku* beyond the individual phrases (Gutzwiller 1974:128). Gutzwiller (1974:130) is inaccurate in concluding that “vagueness and indeterminacy form the key factor in the construction [my emphasis] of *honkyoku*”. Formal structures exist and are frequently labelled in traditional *honkyoku* scores. These named sections will be the starting point of reference from which the comparative analysis of the “*Reibo*” pieces in this thesis will begin.

⁸⁷ The Watazumi version of “*San'an*” has the overall form AA'BB'C. The Myôan version of “*Honte chôshi*” has the overall structure of AA'B.

6.1.1 Transcribing *Honkyoku*

From the above, it is reasonable to conclude that traditionally based methods are unlikely to be useful in detecting many of the kinds of formal structures that might exist in *honkyoku*. If one desires to examine them in any detail (a desire that is not found within the tradition), one must rely on musicologically (rather than traditionally) inspired analytical methods, such as the isolation and subsequent comparison of melodic contours. Although musicologically based methods can be problematic in their dependence upon either transcriptions of performances or transnotations of traditional *shakuhachi* scores into staff notation, it is not necessary to go as far as at least two western musicologists, Gutzwiller (1974:138) and Stanfield (1977:190), who conclude that transcriptions of *honkyoku* are impossible. It will be argued that as long as due regard is given to the aesthetic parameters of the *honkyoku* tradition, transcriptions can contribute to a valid understanding of transmission. I will begin by summarizing the arguments against transcription of *honkyoku* and then present counter arguments.

Gutzwiller has consistently avoided transcriptions of *honkyoku* because of philosophical considerations and what he sees as technical difficulties. According to Gutzwiller (1974:138-142), since the tradition maintains that the process of performing *honkyoku* cannot be separated from the product (i.e., the resultant musical sound), an understanding of any sort of product or “form” in *honkyoku* can only exist in the process of performing. This being the case, meaningful transcriptions, which are possible only if the result is separated from its process, are a violation of the central aesthetic of *honkyoku*. Gutzwiller (1974:134) calls the central aesthetic *fukikata* (吹き方, ‘way of playing’), which “comprises [of] technique *and* its result”. Analyses of transcriptions are consequently considered worthless by Gutzwiller. Furthermore, leaving aside the question of process and form, Gutzwiller (1974:138-142) argues that the precision of Western staff notation inevitably distorts the indeterminacy of *honkyoku*, both in terms of pitch and rhythm.⁸⁸

Though accurate in his assessment of the interrelationship of process and product within the tradition, Gutzwiller, in concluding that transcriptions of *honkyoku* using staff notation violate the spirit of the tradition, risks objectifying, and consequently distorting the essence of *honkyoku* just as much as he accuses transcriptions of doing. Gutzwiller’s statement that “Honkyoku is a non-public music and it will be understood by exactly as many people as are playing the music” (Gutzwiller 1974:142) is only true in terms of a narrow doctrinaire definition of “understanding” as the sole prerogative of a performer. For a mature performer, however, there are many levels of understanding. While the level of understanding one might gain from an analysis of a transcription of a *honkyoku* is completely different from the understanding of a performer during the act of performing, I would argue, nonetheless, that it is a kind of understanding.

⁸⁸ Staff notation is even less suited to symbolize timbre, an element of *honkyoku* at least equal in importance to pitch and rhythm.

Gutzwiller (1974:134-136) equates the Zen *kôan* (公案), which he defines as “a problem—usually stated in the form of a question—that has in itself no logical meaning“, with *honkyoku*. He argues that if *honkyoku* is used together with meditation as “an activity to reach enlightenment” then it must function as a *kôan*. Aitken (1990:330), however, defines the word *kôan* not as a sort of functional tool of meditative practice, but as “universal particular”. He further elaborates that a *kôan* is “a presentation of the harmony of the universal and the particular;⁸⁹ a theme of *zazen* to be made clear”. Clearly a *kôan* is not a didactic strategy or tool at all. The same can be said of *honkyoku*.

The doctrinaire view of *honkyoku* held by Gutzwiller early in his career almost twenty years ago (1974), resembles the view of Zen students who are stuck on the “one hundred foot pole” and have not stepped off into the “worlds of the Ten Directions”.⁹⁰ With a more matured understanding of *honkyoku* comes the realization of living the “everyday” or “ordinary mind”,⁹¹ and not trying to hold onto the peak experience of truth.

The technical difficulties in transcribing *honkyoku* that Gutzwiller sees as violating the “way of playing” are equally less of a problem than they are made out to be. Though the precision of Western staff notation is not ideally suited to represent the indeterminacy of *honkyoku*, it is able to represent a single performance of *honkyoku*. The performer of *honkyoku* is faced with infinite possibilities of performance, but once the performer has chosen and the performance takes place, there is no longer any indeterminacy, and no problem of representing indeterminacy. What must be remembered is that a transcription in staff notation of a single *honkyoku* performance is just that. It is not *honkyoku* itself, nor is it a representation of the infinite number of possible performances of *honkyoku*.

Transcriptions are analogues, like maps and words. A map cannot be identical with “the real thing” without becoming “the real thing”, in which case it is no longer a map but the landscape itself. Yet maps are extremely useful in gaining an understanding of “the real thing”, for example when negotiating from one location to another. Likewise, the word “love” is not what it represents, but functions only as an analogue. As with maps and words, transcriptions can only represent aspects of the recorded sound (itself already an analogue) of one performance of *honkyoku*. A single performance is not *honkyoku*, but rather only one of an infinite number of manifestations of *honkyoku*. A recording of a *honkyoku* performance is even farther from the actual *honkyoku*, in that it cannot reflect the many dimensions of the performance that are inseparable from the moment of the act of performance (Marett 1992). A transcription of a recording removes one a step further from *honkyoku*.

⁸⁹ Though Gutzwiller’s emphasis on “function” misses the point, he is accurate in equating *honkyoku* with *kôan*. There is no better definition of *honkyoku* than “a presentation of the harmony of the universal and the particular”.

⁹⁰ The “hundred foot pole” and the “worlds of the Ten Directions” are referred to in Case 46 in *Mumonkan*. See Aitken (1990:273-277) for a complete reference to this case.

⁹¹ The “ordinary mind” is touched upon in Case 19 of *Mumonkan*. See Aitken (1990:126-131) for a complete reference to this case.

Nevertheless, when one is clear about what they are, transcriptions, like maps and words, can be useful in understanding certain aspects of *honkyoku*.

Stanfield (1977:190)) has adopted the same stance as Gutzwiller on transcribing *honkyoku*, stating that “a detailed transcription of any one performance runs counter to the ‘gestalt’ of the music”. Instead, he attempts to represent “an ideal application of performance practice details” as taught by his teacher. Ironically, the make-believe result—a representation of something that has never existed—is even further away from the reality of *honkyoku* than transcriptions of recordings of performances that actually took place. The idealized transcriptions are like maps based upon one’s idealized memory of the streets of a city rather than upon the city streets themselves.

Contrary to both Gutzwiller’s and Stanfield’s unyielding position, a transcription of *honkyoku* in staff notation can be a useful source of data if the limitations (inherent in any analogue) are always taken into account in deriving conclusions from the data. Like the image generated by an electron microscope, which is not the object itself, a transcription of a recording of a single *honkyoku* performance, though in no way *honkyoku* itself, can still be a valuable source of data from which conclusions about *honkyoku* can be made.

It is interesting to note that in his most recent article on *shakuhachi honkyoku* (Gutzwiller and Bennett 1991:36-59), Gutzwiller presents a computer aided analysis of the acoustical characteristics of a few *honkyoku* phrases, which he believes represent some of the most common tone cells⁹² in *honkyoku* of the Kinko lineage. The data used in the analysis was generated by actual performances of the phrases, in this case by Gutzwiller himself. Though Gutzwiller (1974:138) earlier states that transcriptions of *honkyoku* are an impossibility, his conclusions in this later article are based upon the analyses of computer generated images, which are, like transcriptions in staff notation, analogues of performances of *honkyoku*.

A parallel paradigm with regards to words (analogues) versus the experience of realization (*honkyoku*) exists in the Zen Buddhist tradition. On the one hand, Suzuki (1966:81) states that “Buddhist faith is not looking outwards but inwards. It denies any reality in words, in concepts, in language”. It follows that there are many instances of Zen masters who “sometimes utter a primitive cry or burst out in a meaningless ejaculation or gesture” (Suzuki 1966:50). Yet Zen literature abounds with the words of the masters. Twelfth century Zen master Dôgen was especially prolific in his writings. Kim (1985:58) explains that for Dôgen, “words, like deeds, have at once limiting and liberating functions, or, as Dôgen himself put it, ‘discriminating thought *is* words and phrases, and...words and phrases *liberate* discriminating thought’”, and “In spite of inherent frailties in their make-up, words are the bearers of ultimate truth. In this respect, words are not different from things, events, or beings—all are ‘alive’ in Dôgen’s thought”. On this level of thinking, transcriptions of recordings of *honkyoku* performances are also “alive” with meaning.

⁹² Gutzwiller uses the term “tone cell” to denote what he believes to be a fundamental musical unit in the *honkyoku*. See below p.323 for his definition of “tone cell”.

6.1.2 Existing Musicological Analyses That Use Transcriptions

Objections to the transcription and analysis of *honkyoku* and questions regarding their compatibility with the central aesthetics of the tradition were addressed above. Before embarking upon the transcription and subsequent analysis of the “*Reibo*” pieces, a brief review of existing musicological analyses of *honkyoku* may suggest analytical methods to explore or avoid. The following critique of existing analyses looks at their effectiveness, firstly, as analogues and a means of communicating an understanding of *honkyoku* and, secondly, at the degree to which they are accurate analogues.

As mentioned above (p.306), and in contrast to Gutzwiller and Stanfield, Tukitani transcribes and analyzes *honkyoku*. Tukitani first used data from transcriptions of performances in analyses of *honkyoku* in her M.A. thesis (1969a), and in an article derived from that thesis, entitled 尺八古典本曲の研究 ― 構成法について ― (*Shakuhachi koten honkyoku no kenkyû; kôseihô ni tsuite*, ‘Research into the *Shakuhachi* Classical *Honkyoku*; a Constructive Analysis’) (1969b).

The initial section of Tukitani’s analyses focuses upon “the phrase”, which is defined within three parameters: scale, dynamics, and rhythm. By scale, Tukitani means the stability derived from what she calls the core notes or nuclear tones (核音, *kakuon*, in contrast to “tonic”, with its harmonic implications of western music theory). In *honkyoku* performed on the standard 1.8 *shaku* length flute, these core tones are d, g, a, and c (1969b:44), of which d and g are the more fundamental.⁹³ The dynamics are the patterns of relationships between loudness and softness and the melodic lines. Rhythm is the patterns of relationships between note durations and the melodic line. Examples of dynamic and rhythmical patterns found in *honkyoku* are also described, but their sources and the methods of deriving them are not explained in this particular article.

While this sort of analysis is valuable, it is not as germane to the main theme of this thesis, the transmission of *honkyoku*, as the second part of Tukitani’s analysis, which looks at the overall structures of particular *honkyoku*. Unlike Gutzwiller, she has no problem about describing the formal structure of *honkyoku* she studies. An example of a structure found in many individual *honkyoku* is described as having a beginning, a climax or “high sound” (高音, *takane*), a “shift” or “change” (転, *ten*), being a secondary climax, and an ending. Other structural forms given as examples are more detailed. For example, the piece “*Kokû*” as performed at the temple Myôanji in Kyôto, is said to have the six part structure: A, A', B, C, D, and E. The section A is made of the phrases a+b; section A' is a'+b'; section B is c+b'+d; section C is e+b'+d; section D is f+e+b'; and section E is g+b'+h. Tukitani notes that if the b phrase is thought of as the core, then the sections could be labeled A, A', A'', etc. (Tukitani 1969b:50-51).

An article written four years later, entitled 尺八古典における同名異曲の問題 (*Shakuhachi koten ni okeru dômei ikkyoku no mondai*, ‘Questions Concerning Classical *Shakuhachi* Pieces of Different Melodies with the Same Titles’) (1973:225-250), points even more to the direction that this study takes. Tukitani analyzes three

⁹³ The term “core tone” and Tukitani’s definition is adopted in the analysis of this thesis (see p.363).

performances of the piece “*Mukaiji*” representing three lineages, Myôan Taizan, Chikuho, and Kinko. In contrast to the previous work, analyses in this article are comparative rather than structural. In other words, the versions of each piece are compared with one another rather than individual pieces being taken apart to see how they work. The comparative analysis between versions of pieces representing different lineages directly addresses the issue of transmission, a characteristic that becomes increasingly evident in Tukitani’s later work.

Though Tukitani’s analysis in this article is based upon transcriptions of the entire piece, transcriptions of only the first seven to eleven phrases of each version are presented. In the same article, notes representing the melodic contours of versions within the groups of pieces “*Kokû*” and “*San’ya*” are also compared. These notes are said to be derived from transcriptions, but the transcriptions are not shown and it is unclear how the melodic contours are derived. The derivation and analysis of “prominent notes” in Tukitani’s later article suggests a method of analysis adopted in this thesis.

Both of these early analyses of Tukitani suffer somewhat from the lack of explanation of the methodology of both transcription and analysis. This thesis, on the other hand, attempts to make clear the methodology of transcription and analysis. Furthermore, in the comparative analysis, Tukitani looks at only three lineages, and again does not clearly state the performer and performance used in the analysis. The basis for the analysis in the present thesis is broadened to represent particular performances by ten clearly identified performers who represent at least five lines of transmission.

Finally, in leaving aside the area of formal analysis and concentrating upon comparative analyses of pieces representing different lineages, the trend in Tukitani’s later research toward issues almost entirely related to transmission can already be seen. As stated earlier, this trend suggests that over time, Tukitani is intuitively focusing more upon the issues that are most pertinent to the performing members of the *shakuhachi* tradition. The direction Tukitani’s research has taken validates the emphasis this thesis places upon the issue of transmission.

Two other analyses based in part upon transcriptions of actual performances of *honkyoku* are by Lee (1986) and Takahashi (1990). Transcriptions of performances of the piece “*Kokû*” (虚空, ‘Empty Sky’) by three generations of performers within the Chikuho lineage are analyzed by Lee. Transcriptions of entire performances of pieces are analyzed and the methodology employed discussed. Solutions to some of the technical problems in transcribing *honkyoku* are suggested. For example, the use of a time line together with the spatial representation of duration of notes is adopted to reflect the “free rhythm” of *honkyoku*. Other problems, such as the relationship between the process of playing notes and pitch, as well as between process and the important element of timbre, are not, however, addressed. In the present study, a method of reflecting the relationships between process, pitch, and timbre in the transcriptions is developed. While similarities and differences in melodic content, durations, and other components between the three generations of performers are described by Lee (1986), structural forms and organizational patterns such as tonal cells are not discussed.

Though implicitly about transmission, the subject is not explicitly addressed. Most of the discussion is about change within the tradition, but not about change *and* transmission. In addition, the study is limited in that it discusses the transmission of only one piece within a single lineage, in this case, the piece “*Kokû*” of Chikuho *ryû*.⁹⁴ As mentioned above, the present study looks directly at an issue central to the tradition, that of transmission, making use of data derived from recordings of ten performances by players representing at least two versions of a piece and five lines of transmission.

Takahashi (1990:295-309) makes use of both transcriptions and scores written in original notations in his analysis of “*Honte chôshi*” (本手調子, ‘Original Fingering Tuning’). He concludes that analyses based on traditional scores alone are impossible. Takahashi’s arguments are discussed in detail below (pp.327-328).

Two of the earliest musicological analyses of *honkyoku* in non-Japanese literature were attempted by Malm (1959:158-162) and Weisgarber (1968:313-343). Malm transcribed and analyzed the piece “*Hifumi hachi gaeshi*” (一二三鉢返, ‘One Two Three, Returning the Bowl’). Weisgarber also transcribed and analyzed “*Hifumi hachi gaeshi*”,⁹⁵ as well as the pieces “*Banshiki no shirabe*” (盤渉の調), and “*San-ya sugaki*” [sic] (三谷菅垣, should read “*San’ya sugagaki*”). One of the problems with Malm’s transcription and analysis stems from an apparent ignorance of the fact that “*Hifumi hachi gaeshi*” is actually two pieces, “*Hifumi chô*” and “*Hachi gaeshi*”.

An even greater problem is Malm’s unqualified use of European musical terminology such as “tonic” and “dominant” together with such conventions as time signatures, and bar lines. In doing so, Malm arbitrarily forces *honkyoku* into theoretical boundaries that are meaningless to traditional ways of viewing the music. The harmonic framework and hierarchy of pitches implied by Malm’s analysis are not applicable to *honkyoku*.⁹⁶ Likewise there are no beats in *honkyoku*, much less a hierarchy of beats of the type that time signatures and bar lines imply. The result is a transcription that is culturally inappropriate as an analogue of *honkyoku* performance. Malm (1959:160) uses the term “breath phrase” once, but only in the context of a discussion of “grace notes”. Like Weisgarber (see below), the importance of the breath in performing *honkyoku*, as well as the phrase as a formal unit of *honkyoku*, escaped him.

Despite the above, it is to Malm’s credit that his observations in a footnote (Malm 1959:162) regarding the fluctuating of the tonal centre hint at the concept of core notes or tonal centres used by Tukitani, Gutzwiller, and others to describe *honkyoku*.

There are also a number of problems with Weisgarber’s discussion of *shakuhachi honkyoku*, including his analyses and transcriptions. First of all, Weisgarber assumes that the “tonic” is “g” just because “g” is the final note of the piece, though the

⁹⁴ Almost all other *honkyoku* analyses written in a musicological context also deal with only one lineage of transmission, most commonly being limited to Kinko *ryû*.

⁹⁵ Malm and Weisgarber call the piece “*Hi-fu-mi Hachi Kaeshi*”. “*Hifumi hachi gaeshi*” is linguistically more correct.

⁹⁶ In the transcriptions and analyses, I will also make use of key signatures, but with qualifications which are clearly stated (see p.356).

“tonic” could equally be “d”. Like Malm, Weisgarber ignores the distinction between the two pieces “*Hifumi chô*” and “*Hachi gaeshi*”. The most important unit of *honkyoku*, the phrase as delineated by breaths, is also disregarded. Weisgarber uses the word “phrase” twice but does not define it. In his transcription he uses dotted lines to indicate “what seem to be the phrase, period, or sectional endings” (Weisgarber 1968:322); these dotted lines do not, however correspond to breath phrases.

Central to his analyses are what Weisgarber calls “patterns” or “cells”. These patterns, which are arbitrarily labelled with numbers on the transcriptions, are usually segments of phrases and encompass most of the musical material. Some sections of phrases are inexplicably ignored, however, being neither part of one of Weisgarber’s “patterns” nor labelled a pattern in themselves. One of a number of examples of this in Weisgarber’s transcription and analysis of “*Hi-fu-mi Hachi Kaeshi*” (Weisgarber 1968:319) occurs on the sixth line of between what is labelled patterns no. 10 and no. 7 (see Figure 17, no. 1).

Also left unlabelled by Weisgarber are segments of phrases which are identical to segments that are labelled as “patterns”. An example of this is the first phrase of what Weisgarber calls section 2 (it is in fact the penultimate phrase of “*Hifumi chô*”), which is identical with “pattern 1”, the first phrase of the piece, yet is not identified as such (see Figure 18, no.2).

Weisgarber’s arbitrary and inconsistent labelling and non-labelling of segments of the transcriptions as “phrases” brings to mind the objections made by Treitler to the labelling of segments of plainchant as “formulas” in an analysis of plainchant by Levy (Treitler 1975:15-23). Treitler argues:

If there is any point in speaking of formulas at all, it is that they play into the transmission, or the composition if you will, of the chants to which they belong....we must have some boundary criteria for identifying a formula and distinguishing it from other passages. For the identification of a formula is an assertion of the existence of a piece of more-or-less fixed or stereotyped stuff-material that the composer put into this or that place or that the singer held in readiness for performance upon reaching a certain point in the melody. Either way, we want to be able to say with some confidence, here is that formula, there it is not, and there again is a variant of it. If we cannot do these things with confidence and with criteria that are demonstrable, we will have lost the point of the analysis, for then we would have no reason to think that the formula was any more distinct in the mind of the composer or the singer than in that of the analyst. And in those circumstances we could not make the assertion we meant to make by identifying the formula in the first place.

(Treitler 1975:15-17)

Treitler’s point that formulae must be able to be identified and distinguished from other passages with demonstrable criteria before they can be used in the analysis is applicable to Weisgarber’s article. With his arbitrary and inconsistent “patterns”, chosen with no demonstrable criteria. Weisgarber cannot, as Treitler says, “make the assertion [he] meant to make by identifying the formula in the first place”.

Gutzwiller is a widely published non-Japanese scholar of *shakuhachi* (1974, 1983, 1984, 1991). In contrast to Malm and Weisgarber, he writes with the insight of a *shakuhachi* performer, and is accurate in many of his observations. Some of his conclusion, however, are inconsistent or based upon an incomplete understanding of the *honkyoku* tradition. Among his arguments against transcriptions of performances of *honkyoku*, discussed above (p.311), is his belief that an understanding of any sort of product or “form” in *honkyoku* can only exist in the process of performing. Yet having stated that it cannot be done, he proceeds to convey an understanding of *honkyoku* outside of the process of performing, that is, in his writings.

According to Gutzwiller and Bennett (1991:36), “the primary vehicle by which musical meaning is conveyed” in *honkyoku* is what he calls the “tone cell”. Similar to the “patterns” observed by Weisgarber, Gutzwiller’s tone cells are in their simplest form a main note, which is *kari*, and an auxiliary note, which is *meri*.⁹⁷ Within these simple structures are patterns of intricate relationships between pitch movement, dynamics, and timbre. The pitch of *kari* notes is fixed, while that of *meri* notes moves in specific ways. Both timbre and dynamics develop within a tone cell as determined by the movement from *meri* to *kari* and back to *meri* again. Tension and release is achieved in *honkyoku* through the interplay of the three elements of pitch, timbre, and dynamics within the tone cell and from one tone cell to the next (Gutzwiller 1983:347-348). More specifically, Gutzwiller’s tone cells have three parts, a preparatory note, which is unstable in pitch, softer in dynamics, and *meri* in timbre; the main note, which is stable in pitch, louder in dynamics, and *kari* in timbre; and the ending, which is unstable in pitch, softer in dynamics and *meri* in timbre (Gutzwiller and Bennett 1991:54).

One must remember that Gutzwiller’s studies are based solely upon *honkyoku* of the Kinko lineage, which make up a fraction of the entire *honkyoku* tradition. It is not surprising that, in some cases, his conclusions are applicable only to the Kinko lineage. They become problematic when applied to studies, such as the present thesis, which examine transmission over a number of lineages. While his tone cells may accurately describe Kinko *honkyoku*, they are less relevant to *honkyoku* of other lineages.

For example, elements of Gutzwiller’s tone cells cannot be observed in many of the phrases in the transcriptions of the ten versions of “*Reibo*” analyzed in this study. The most conspicuous examples of this are the *reibo no te* phrases, many of which have no stable *kari* main note at all (eg., phrase 58 of Watazumi’s “*Reibo*” and phrase 43 of Yokoyama’s “*Reibo*”), or consist of very long successions of many *meri* notes followed by one or two concluding *kari* notes (eg., phrase 31 of Watazumi’s “*Furin*”, phrase 33 of Yokoyama’s “*Shôganken reibo*”, phrase 32 of Iwamoto’s “*Furin*”, phrase 39 of Jin’s “*Shôganken reibo*”, and phrase 39 of Sakai’s “*Shôganken reibo*”). Phrases over twenty notes in length that are entirely *meri* notes frequently occur (eg.,

⁹⁷ The terms *kari* and *meri* denote performance techniques that change the pitch being produced without changing the fingering, by altering the angle and distance from which one blows onto the blowing edge of the mouthpiece. The *kari* technique raises the pitch, while the *meri* technique lowers the pitch. The pitches produced with the standard, open-hole fingerings (i.e., D, F, G, A, C on the 1.8 *shaku* length flute) are also called *kari* notes. The latter meaning of the word is used here.

phrase 23 of Yokoyama's "*Shôganken reibo*"). Other phrases may have as many as twenty-six *meri* notes with one or two final *kari* notes at the very end (eg., phrase 31 of Watazumi's "*Furin*"). It becomes extremely difficult to determine in Gutzwiller's terms what might be called the tone cell in many of the phrases in the "*Reibo*" samples. The usefulness of the tone cell concept in this case is much less than it is with Kinko pieces familiar to Gutzwiller.

As stated above, it is rare for a performing member of the *shakuhachi* tradition to transcribe and analyze *honkyoku* performances. In most of the analyses of transcriptions and transnotations of *honkyoku* that have been undertaken by others, the analyses are comparative, dealing with the similarities and differences that may exist between versions of the same *honkyoku* piece or type. Clearly and in marked contrast to the Western musicology tradition, the act of formally analyzing *honkyoku* with the use of either transcriptions or scores is not an established and integral part of the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition. Musicological methods, nevertheless, facilitate the examination of elements of the *honkyoku*, for example, music contour and formal structures. These elements may be of little interest to *honkyoku* performers, but a knowledge and understanding of their existence is one kind of insight into the process of transmission.

6.1.3 Analyses of *Honkyoku* Scores

In contrast to the few analyses of transcriptions of *honkyoku* performances in the literature, there are a number of examples of analyses of scores of *honkyoku* which rely solely upon either scores written in traditional notation or transnotations of such scores from traditional *shakuhachi* notation to staff notation. In this thesis, I do not, however, rely heavily upon traditional scores or their transnotations as sources of analytical data. Analyses of this type do not address the process of performance in what remains largely an oral tradition. I have outlined elsewhere (Lee 1991:18-35) some of the problems which arise in attempting to interpret *honkyoku* scores as representative of performances; for example, I draw attention to the numerous discrepancies between what notation symbols mean and how they are realized in performance. Takahashi (see below, p.[327](#)) has also examined these problems.

Though the methodology of such analyses have little bearing upon the present study, they illustrate the importance placed on the tracing of lineages and genealogies in the *shakuhachi* tradition, thus helping to validate the focus of the present study—transmission. The importance given to lineages and genealogies is further emphasized by the amount of literature on the subject, including oral and written genealogical histories.

In the present study, where data is taken from traditional scores (i.e., the labelling and placement of formal divisions of the "*Reibo*" pieces), interpretation of notation symbols is not required. Furthermore, the data derived from the traditional scores is directly confirmed by transcriptions of performances of the pieces (see p.[363](#)).

Of the existing studies which are based upon scores, only one, by Takahashi (see below), addresses the process of performance and deals with the discrepancies

between traditional scores and their realization. Other score analyses do not deal with the process of playing *honkyoku* nor do they attempt to elucidate aspects of the music such as formal structure. Instead, almost all of the analyses of this type attempt to show similarities and differences in the notation which are then explained by similarities and differences in either lineages or historical periods.

Takahashi (1990:295-309) makes use of both transcriptions and scores written in original notations in his analysis of “*Honte chôshi*” (本手調子). He also discusses an area of transmission that brings into question the validity of analyses based upon transnotations, namely, that of the construction of the instrument itself and how it has affected pitch in *honkyoku* playing. He describes how variations in traditional *shakuhachi* construction methods, including two systems of placing finger holes, have affected the musical realization of the scores, in particular the phenomenon of tonal ambiguity. The variations in construction, which can be grouped into two methods corresponding to the two major *shakuhachi* centres of Edo-period Japan, Edo and Kyôto, result in variations in pitch production.

Takahashi also observes the ambiguity of pitch in traditional notation which is manifested in the performance of *honkyoku*. He concludes that transnotations into staff notation of the piece “*Honte chôshi*” cannot be made by using the data presented in the original written score alone (1990:301), a conclusion which has implications for other transnotations. Traditional *honkyoku* scores may give only one tablature symbol where in fact there are two pitch possibilities. For example, the finger position ツ (*tsu*) (only the bottom finger hole open) produces the pitch f on a standard length *shakuhachi*. Two pitches, e and e-flat, can be produced with the same finger position by using different degrees of the *meri* technique.⁹⁸

Yet in some *honkyoku* scores of “*Honte chôshi*”, only one type of *tsu meri* symbol is used. According to Takahashi, whether to play e or e-flat is part of the orally transmitted tradition.

Tukitani’s treatment of two versions of the piece “*Tsuru no Sugomori*” (鶴の巣籠, ‘Nesting of the Cranes’), namely those of Kinko and Tozan lineages (Tukitani 1976:80-87), is an example of total reliance on transnotations of traditional scores for analysis. In an article entitled 「尺八古典における同名異曲の問題」 (*Shakuhachi koten ni okeru dômei ikyoku no mondai*, ‘Some Questions on *Shakuhachi* Pieces of Different Melodies under the Same Titles’), Tukitani looks at three to nine versions of the four pieces “*Kyorei*”, “*Kokû*”, “*Mukaiji*”, and “*San’ya*”. Segments of transnotations of the versions are used as a basis for comparison. Though some conclusions regarding the transmission of these pieces are made, the problem of notation versus performance is not addressed. Furthermore, the transnotations from traditional scores to staff notation adds a layer of interpretation between the data and the conclusion.

⁹⁸ Deviations in pitch up to a perfect fourth can be produced on the *shakuhachi* with no change in finger positions through what are called the *meri/kari* techniques. These techniques involve subtle changes in the distance from the lips to the blowing edge, and to a lesser degree the angle from which the air stream leaves the lips of the performer and is deflected by the blowing edge of the instrument. The *meri* technique lowers the pitch, while the *kari* technique raises the pitch of any given fingering.

Gutzwiller (1984), writing in German, also presents a comparative analysis of *honkyoku* using the transnotations of scores written in traditional notation. Three lineages within Kinko *ryû* are represented in his analysis, those of Araki Kodô (荒木古董), Miura Kindô (三浦琴童), and Kawase Junsuke (川瀬順輔). The piece he compares is the classic “*Shin kyorei*” (真虚霊). As with the above example, the subject of transmission is a focus of the study, but the issue of discrepancies between scores and performances is not addressed.

Another score analysis was published in 1984 by Toya Deiko in his book *Komusô shakuhachi shinan* (虚無僧尺八指南, ‘Teachings of the *komusô shakuhachi*’) (Toya 1984:97-101). Toya gives a brief analysis of scores of “*Hifumi chô*” (一二三調, ‘One Two Three Searching’), in an attempt to show how the piece has changed over time in mode and ornamentation. In contrast to Tukitani and Gutzwiller, whose transnotations insert a layer of interpretation, Toya worked directly from the traditional scores written in *shakuhachi* notation. Like Tukitani, he does not consider the discrepancies between notation and realization in performance.

Yamaue is a *shakuhachi honkyoku* performer who amassed a large collection of his own hand-written *honkyoku* scores representing many lines of transmission, some of which have been published. In the book, *Yamaue Getsuzan shûshû shakuhachi fu: Ôshû hen and kyûshû hen* (山上月山蒐集尺八譜 奥州編・九州編, Yamaue Getsuzan’s collection of *shakuhachi* scores; Ôshû and Kyûshû editions) (Yamaue 1984), are a number of comparisons of traditionally notated scores. Yamaue has written out the scores of different versions of the same piece parallel to each other, lining up what he assumes are the same phrases in different versions. In one case, Yamaue (1984:54-59) compares two versions of “*Reibo*”, that of Jin Nyodô (written in red) and that of Orito Nyogetsu and Takahashi Kûzan (written in black). In a second case, three versions, that of Sakata Tôsui (written in red), Gotô Tôsui (written in black), and Uramoto Setchô (written in red) are lined up together (Yamaue 1984:60-66). The titles of formal divisions of the pieces, such as *Take shirabe* (竹調, ‘bamboo searching’) and *Hachigaeshi* (鉢返し, ‘returning the bowl’) (see p.361) are prominently notated.⁹⁹

As is the case with many *honkyoku* performers, Yamaue was particularly fascinated with the issue of transmission, as evidenced not only by the above comparisons, but also his extensive genealogies (see Chapter 4, p.177). As with the previous examples, however, Yamaue does not address the relationship between scores and performances. A further problem with these comparisons is that all of the scores were originally written by Yamaue, presumably after he had learned the pieces, and consequently may display more similarities than actually exist between the lineages represented. Finally, Yamaue does nothing beyond lining up the notes of the scores; no conclusions are drawn from the collation of the scores.

In all of the above examples of *shakuhachi honkyoku* score analyses, the main theme is transmission, particularly in terms of lineages and transmission lines. Similarities and differences between individual transmission lines are compared on the level of

⁹⁹ Relationships between the titles of formal divisions that can be found in traditional scores of “*Reibo*” pieces are discussed in this study (see pp.360-366).

individual notes. There are no cases of the traditional scores or transnotations being used to formally analyze the music in a western musicological sense. In only one of the examples of analyses of scores (Takahashi) is the relationship between the notation and the process of the performance discussed. The aspect of the *honkyoku* tradition that is orally transmitted is ignored altogether in studies such as the above examples, which are based entirely upon scores. Though the focus of analyses of this type helps to validate the emphasis placed upon transmission in the present study, the methodology and the conclusions have little relevance to this thesis.

6.2 Tradition-Based Approaches to Honkyoku Analyses within the Shakuhachi Tradition

While musicological approaches to analyzing *honkyoku* yield insights into such elements as the structural organization of the music and lines of transmission, the analytical approaches that members of the tradition use during the process of transmission yield another kind of insight, which cannot be drawn from musicological methods. In particular, tradition-based approaches to *honkyoku* analysis increase an understanding of the experiential elements of *honkyoku* transmission as it occurs within the tradition. More significantly, tradition-based approaches show what the tradition sees as the most important elements of the *honkyoku* during the process of transmission. It is primarily for this reason that this thesis incorporates a method of analysis based upon traditional methods.

The following translations of excerpts of written tradition-based analyses and discussions of oral analyses are presented in order to evolve strategies that can be used in this study to reveal some of the experiential elements of *honkyoku* transmission as it occurs within the tradition.

One type of tradition-based analysis is the written descriptions of pieces or parts of pieces which adopt an approach similar to the teaching method a teacher would use during a *shakuhachi* lesson: explaining the details of performance of a *honkyoku* one phrase or performance technique at a time. In contrast to analyses of European art music tradition, as well as the majority of ethnomusicological analyses of other music cultures, these types of analyses of the *honkyoku* are based upon neither transcriptions of performances nor scores of the pieces. Though they may annotate in detail existing scores written in traditional *shakuhachi* notation, the scores themselves are not what is being analyzed. Instead, the scores are used only as a form of reference, as opposed to an object of analysis, to show which phrase or performing technique is being discussed.¹⁰⁰

Most importantly, only a *shakuhachi* performer already able to perform a given *honkyoku* is able to analyze the piece in such a manner. Furthermore, the function of the analysis is to assist the reader in performing the piece, rather than to enhance his/her intellectual understanding or appreciation of the piece and its form. The

¹⁰⁰ See Lee (1991) for a detailed description of traditional *shakuhachi* notation and its relationship to performance.

emphasis is on the “doing”, the experience of performing the piece, rather than the intellectual manipulation of theories to verbally describe the piece.

A prime example of this type of analysis can be found in *Ichī On Jōbutsu* (一音成仏; ‘One Sound Becoming Buddha’), a periodical catering to *shakuhachi honkyoku* enthusiasts. In Issue No.5 (June 1, 1983), Okamoto Chikugai (岡本竹外) (1983:2-22) examines the method of performing the piece “*Ôshû Reibo*” as part of an article entitled “About ‘*Ôshû Reibo*’” (奥州鈴慕について, *Ôshû reibo ni tsuite*). The following translation is taken from the third section of the article, called “The method of blowing Zen for ‘*Ôshû reibo*’” (奥州鈴慕の吹禅法, *Ôshû reibo no suizenhō*). Terms for specific *shakuhachi* performance techniques will be defined in the translation only if the context warrants it.

This presents a summary of the “method of blowing Zen” (吹禅法, *suizenhō*), as transmitted by the *shakuhachi* player Konashi Kinsui (小梨錦吹) and inherited by his student Daimon Nyogen (大門如玄) (See [genealogy chart, p.192](#)). This offering of instruction is respectfully dedicated to “blowing Zen” (吹禅, *suizen*).

(*Bamboo Searching*)¹⁰¹

This sound is blown two times.¹⁰²

The first thing in the act of “tuning” the breath and the heart, according to one way of thinking, is the warming up of the bamboo, which also has the effect of normalizing the melody (調子, *chōshi*). This is especially true in the case of long instruments. In the process of playing the instrument, the pitch (音律, *onritsu*) will become higher, so it is necessary to consider this area.

[The second phrase of the piece.]

The fingering position ツ (*tsu*) is played from a *chû meri* (中メリ, middle *meri*)¹⁰³ position of pitch. Using the wedge blowing technique¹⁰⁴ until a lingering tone remains, one then moves to the next note, □ (*ro*). With this line

¹⁰¹ This is the first of three divisions notated in the score used by Okamoto. The three sections are *Take shirabe* (竹調べ, ‘Bamboo Searching’ or ‘Bamboo Melody’) *Reibo* (鈴慕, ‘Yearning for the Bell’); and *Hachi gaeshi* (鉢返し, ‘Returning the Bowl’).

¹⁰² 卅乃音吹込二回 (*Sono oto fukikomu nikai*). The piece is treated as follows: first the tablature notation of one or more phrases is given, and then explanations of the performance of the phrase or phrases are presented. The first phrase of the score, however, is the performance command “This sound is blown twice” rather than tablature notation.

¹⁰³ *Meri* (メリ) is a technique which flattens and mutes the sound. *Chû meri* (中メリ, ‘middle *meri*’) refers to the degree of flattening.

¹⁰⁴ 楔吹き, *kusabi buki*. An appropriately named blowing technique which begins with the note or phrase played loudly and fully and gradually decreasing in dynamics and energy until the sound disappears. This technique is especially common in certain lineages of the *Myōan* style of playing.

[in the score, which also includes phrases three and four], unless the spirit (気合, *kiai*, literally ‘spirit uniting’) is full or replete, one is justified in repeating this melody any number of times. There is an oral tradition that this melodic figure (旋律, *senritsu*) must be called the “bamboo melody (竹調べ, *take shirabe*, literally, ‘bamboo searching’) of the tuning of the breath and heart”.

[Okamoto does not discuss individually the third and fourth phrases of the piece. The fifth phrase is divided into two sections by Okamoto.]

[The fifth phrase of the piece.]

The symbol [of the first section] is the *yuri* technique (ユリ, a bending of the pitch by changing the angle and distance of the lips from the blowing edge) which is executed by revolving the chin as if drawing circles. Also, the tail end of the sound is played *meri*. The symbol [of the second section of the phrase] indicates a *yuri* sound which is an exhalation that is alternatively strong-weak-strong-weak, produced while blowing in a manner that is exactly like eating food.

Regarding the *yuri* sound, when it is written 「揺り音」 (*yuri oto*, literally ‘*yuri* sound’), one shakes one’s neck from left to right as with a boat rolling side to side and pitching up and down. Of course, besides this there are the *jôge yuri* and the *fune no kubi yuri*.¹⁰⁵

However, it is easy to understand why the *yuri* of the Tohoku lineage is written with the characters 「淘り」.¹⁰⁶ Grains which have been put into a container overflowing with water can be selected out while shaking the container. Likewise, the sound is shaken when playing the technique. It is like the water that falls from the container, and is not the so called 「揺り」 (*yuri*, shake, sway) technique.

These two *yuri* are given the following expedient names: 「回はしユリ」 (*mawashi yuri*, ‘turning, revolving *yuri*’) and 「平ユリ」 (*hira yuri*, ‘common or flat *yuri*’).

With the fingering ル (*ru*) at the end of the *hira yuri* of the ツ fingering, the third finger hole is hit. The ツ is written as being *chû meri* (‘middle *meri*’). However, with bamboo whose hole placements are determined in the old way of flutes made without *ji* (地, ‘filler’),¹⁰⁷ the first hole [from the bottom] is lower than on modern instruments. Therefore, [the first hole open] will

¹⁰⁵ *Jôge yuri*: 上下揺, ‘up and down *yuri*’. *Fune no kubi yuri*: 舟首揺, literally ‘ship neck *yuri*’. The *fune no kubi* is the spar in the very front of the boat.)

¹⁰⁶ The character 淘 is normally pronounced *tô*, and has the meaning ‘select’.

¹⁰⁷ See pp.274 for a discussion of flutes constructed with and without *ji*.

produce the pitch of *chû meri*. There is nothing to say other than one must listen with a discriminating ear.¹⁰⁸

[The sixth phrase of the piece.]

[Okamoto also divides the sixth phrase into two parts for discussion.]

[The first part of the sixth phrase] is applying the *meri* technique to the ツ fingering downward a little, returning to the original [pitch] and then moving on to the レ (*re*) fingering. With the note ツ, *kari* and *meri* are quickly scooped up with the chin, moving on to レ. Next, the *hira yuri* of the *yuri* sounds is played. The 押し (*oshi*, literally ‘push’) technique is applied to the fourth hole. After this, the *oshi* technique is also applied to the third hole. In this case, however, a special fingering technique is used. The finger of the third hole is slid up and down so as to produce a sound like the *nayashi* technique. In the latter part of phrase six, the レ is given a large *nayashi*, after which the *oshi* technique is applied to the four hole. The *oshi* is the same as before.

(Okamoto 1983:6-7)¹⁰⁹

Okamoto continues in the same manner, eventually analyzing the entire piece. At the end of the analytical section is a reproduction of the entire score of the “*Reibo*” under scrutiny.

Four main points of Okamoto’s analysis that are useful in arriving at an analytical method for this thesis can be seen in the above excerpt. Firstly, the importance of the line of transmission to which the described performance methods belong is evident from the initial sentence and elsewhere. Throughout the text, performance details are discussed as they are related to transmission. For example, in his discussion of the fifth phrase, Okamoto explains the manner and meaning of the way the technique *yuri* is written by a specific line of transmission, the Tohoku lineage.

Secondly, the method of describing the piece in terms of the minute details of the process of playing is central to the analysis, especially the various *meri* techniques and special finger movements. The emphasis of process can be seen in Okamoto’s method of dealing with pitch, which is important not only as specific frequencies of sound waves, but also in its relationship to the spirit of the performance and performer. In fact, the particular pitches that are produced by the performance techniques are not specified directly.

Thirdly, Okamoto’s analysis of “*Reibo*” assumes that the reader has a working knowledge of both the symbols and the terminology used in discussing and notating basic *shakuhachi* performance techniques. His analysis is a commentary directed to insiders to the tradition. It is not a step-by-step “how to” description of the piece.

¹⁰⁸ The point Okamoto is making here is that in aiming for the same pitch, the performer needs different techniques with different flutes.

¹⁰⁹ See Appendix 4 for the original Japanese text of this passage.

Okamoto does not comment at all on places in the score where he assumes that the notation gives enough information on its own.

Fourthly, Okamoto's analysis in some instances assumes a knowledge of the piece which only a member of his lineage, or one who has already been taught the piece, might have. For example, the first line of the score is a performance command, which reads, "This sound is blown two times". This sentence on its own is so ambiguous as to be meaningless. What sound is to be repeated? It could be the first sound of the first phrase, the entire first phrase, or the entire section. The meaning of this phrase cannot be known without explanation, yet Okamoto offers none.

It is important to emphasize the distinction of Okamoto's use of the score as an adjunct to performance. It is clearly not the object of analysis.

An earlier example of this type of *honkyoku* analysis is to be found in the writings of Uramoto Setchô,¹¹⁰ noted *honkyoku* performer of this century (see p.192). Uramoto's writings are compiled and edited by Inagaki and published in a book entitled "Master Uramoto Setchô, Who Loved Shakuhachi Honkyoku and old Flutes" (Inagaki, ed. 1985). In an article written in 1929 (in Inagaki, ed. 1985:156-170), Uramoto analyzes six pieces which he calls the *Take shirabe* (竹調べ, 'Bamboo Searching') pieces.¹¹¹ The six pieces are "*Hifumi chô*" (一二三調, 'One, Two, Three, Searching'); "*San'ya shirabe*" (三谷調, 'Three Valleys Searching'); "*Sugomori chôshi*" (巣籠調子, 'Nesting of the Cranes Tuning'); "*Yamato chôshi*" (大和調子, 'Yamato Tuning'); "*Take shirabe*" (竹調, 'Bamboo Tuning'); and "*Honte chôshi*" (本手調子, 'Original Fingering Tuning').

In some instances, Uramoto gives little more information than a brief explanation of the piece as transmitted by various lineages, the number of minutes and seconds within which the pieces should be performed, and a sentence or two about the performance practices of several of the phrases of the piece. With other pieces, he gives more elaborate performance instructions similar to those of Okamoto. For example, in his discussion of the piece "*Yamato chôshi*" (大和調子), he writes:

An area where care must be taken in the manner of playing is the places where the spaces between phrases are cut off and not connected with a trailing off [of the ending note]. For example, the ハイハ (*ha i ha*; producing the pitches 'c d c' on a 1.8 *shaku* flute)¹¹² at the end of the second phrase and the レチレ (*re chi re*; 'g a-flat g') at the end of the fourth phrase are like this. Among the six *Take shirabe* [pieces] mentioned herein, this is a unique [melodic] figure. Also, in melodic lines such as ツローハハーハイハ (*tsu ro - ha ha - ha i ha*; 'e-flat d - c c - c d c') or ツーツローハハーハイハ (*tsu - tsu ro ha ha - ha i ha*;

¹¹⁰ Uramoto is one of six *honkyoku* players whose performances form the basis for the analysis in this thesis.

¹¹¹ These pieces are also called *Shirabe* (調, 'Searching') or *Chôshi* (調子, 'Melody' or 'Tuning') pieces. They frequently act as preludes to larger *honkyoku*.

¹¹² The pitches produced on a 1.8 *shaku* flute by playing the fingerings noted by Uramoto here and elsewhere are given in order to facilitate an understanding of what Uramoto is saying.

An innovation introduced by Samuelson is the graphic display of pitches and pitch changes by the up and down placement and movements of a single line, with timings indicated as the line progresses horizontally left to right (see Figure 18). The English language analyses are like the Japanese language analyses in their focus on the process of performance at the level of detailed technique, and in the importance placed on the phrase in organizing the analysis.

Analyses of *shakuhachi honkyoku* found within the tradition, whether written in Japanese or in English, deal with the performance of the piece or pieces in question. Attempts to examine *honkyoku* as an independent musical entity, separate from the act of performance, as typically occurs in the analysis of European art music, are rare in traditional *shakuhachi* contexts.

The analyses described above can be characterized in the following ways. They emphasize the transmission of the piece, both in terms of the lineage and the act of transmission from the writer to the reader of the analysis. They do not analyze scores of the pieces as separate from the performance of the pieces. They focus upon technical details involved in performing the piece, in particular finger movements and the *meri* technique. Most of the analyses also examine the similarities and differences between pieces that are considered versions of the same piece or family of pieces. Most importantly, they all analyze the pieces from the standpoint of a performer. None of their analyses would be possible without the knowledge and experience of one who performs the pieces. As will become evident later (pp.370-418), all of the above elements are useful in evolving a methodology of analysis appropriate to this thesis.

6.2.1 Informal Oral Analyses

Another type of tradition-based analytical procedure can be seen in the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition. Within my experience, members of the *shakuhachi* tradition frequently analyze orally the similarities and differences between performance practices of various performers in general, as well as individual performances. These verbal analyses are similar to the “blow by blow” description of the piece “*Ôshû reibo*” given by Okamoto and partially translated above. The manner of execution of particular phrases or, even more commonly, performance techniques encompassing less than a single phrase is the topic of discussion. As with most of the written analyses discussed above, the emphasis is on details. Rarely have I encountered discussions of formal structures of either *honkyoku* or phrases within them.

The following is a description of one such analytical discussion which illustrates the above. One of the most evocative and frequently performed *honkyoku* is the Kinko-lineage version of “*Shika no tône*” (鹿の遠音, ‘Distant Sound of Deer, a duet’). My first teacher, Chikuhō II, taught me the piece as transmitted by the Myōan lineage, which is very different from the version transmitted through the Kinko lineage. Eventually, I learned the Kinko version with the help of *shakuhachi* playing friends

who were of the Kinko lineage, and from numerous available recordings by various performers.¹¹³

About ten years ago, I performed in concert the Kinko version with Osaka based Tajima Tadashi (田嶋直士, b.1942). At that time Tajima said that it was interesting how I had incorporated performance practices and techniques from Kinko performers who represented a number of distinct sub-lineages of the Kinko lineage (see p.251). These performers each had unique, recognizable ways of playing certain phrases of the piece. While each individual's performance practices might change with every performance, those variations are usually much less than the differences between performers representing various sub-lineages.¹¹⁴

Tajima proceeded to informally analyze my performance. He said, for example, that he recognized a Yamaguchi Gorô influence when I entered one phrase in the uppermost register from an almost imperceptibly quiet and smooth pianissimo. Other performers attack the note more loudly. Elsewhere, Tajima recognized in my playing the powerful breathiness combined with a certain pattern of pitch bending for which Yokoyama Katsuya is noted when performing that particular phrase. Finally, in a series of phrases that are said to represent the guttural coughing of the deer, Tajima said that he detected in my playing the embellishment techniques which he associates with Aoki Reibo. This kind of informal, oral analysis or critique is fairly common amongst *honkyoku* performers.

It appeared that where differences occurred between performers of various sub-lineages of the Kinko lineage, I had, in part unconsciously, incorporated the performance practices which most appealed to me. My eclectic version of the piece was ultimately validated amongst members of the *honkyoku* tradition in 1989, when I was requested to record the piece with Yokoyama on a CD released by the prestigious Ongaku no Tomo Sha label (Yokoyama 1989b) thereby establishing my version as an orthodox one within the tradition. Tajima's analysis of my performance of "*Shika no tône*" is especially relevant to the theme of transmission since it shows how a specific version of a piece came to happen.

Informal oral analyses such as the above example are similar to the written analyses discussed earlier in the following ways: they pay particular attention to lineage; they treat the music from the viewpoint of an experienced performer rather than a listener, however knowledgeable; they deal with details of performance at the level of the phrase or, more commonly, at a level of performance technique which constitutes only a part of a phrase; they consider pitch, timbre, dynamics, duration, and ornamentation as elements of the performance; finally they look at the similarities and differences between versions of the same piece.

¹¹³ See p. 247 for a discussion of the ways in which readily available recordings have become part of the transmission process of the *honkyoku* tradition over the past several decades.

¹¹⁴ Note the emphasis Tajima places upon lineages and transmission in his interest in my performance of "*Shika no tône*".

The following is a summary of the main points gleaned from both the written and oral tradition-based analyses discussed above:

These approaches will be incorporated as much as possible in the analytical methods used in the present study of *honkyoku*. Regarding points three and four, however, it is not practical to assume that the readers of this thesis have a working knowledge of the symbols and terminology used in the *honkyoku* tradition, or that they possess the knowledge of members of particular *shakuhachi* lineages. Explanations and annotations will be given where deemed necessary. Nonetheless, care will be taken to examine *honkyoku* as much as possible from the knowledgeable performer's point of view.

The preoccupation with comparing pieces which share similar names and/or melodic material seen in the examples of analyses presented above, and of which this thesis is also an example, may be attempts to define the *honkyoku* itself. It is indicative of the elusive quality of *honkyoku*, which is changing with every performance and whose form is vagueness. It is appropriate that the analysis in this thesis is primarily a comparative one. In the following section, versions of the piece “*Reibo*” will be analyzed in a number of ways that will take into consideration most of the elements which have been observed in the analyses discussed above.

6.3 Methodology of Transcription and Analysis

As stated above, the analyses in this thesis compare the transcriptions of ten recordings of single performances of *honkyoku* whose relationships have been determined by genealogies based upon oral and written histories of *honkyoku* transmissions. Two methods of comparative analysis have been devised, a musicologically inclined method and a more tradition-based method.

First of all, the ten recordings are transcribed in detail, in a way that allows “outsiders” to relate them to the recordings. The transcriptions attempt to embody the process of performing the pieces as well as the product of performing the notes. In particular, the processes involved in producing the *meri* and *kari* notes (see pp.[269-270](#)) are incorporated in the transcriptions through a system using colour as a code (see below, p.[353](#)). The *meri* and *kari* notes are significant in terms of both pitch and timbre. They are also embedded with philosophical meaning.

Secondly, the transcriptions are orthographically simplified by replacing frequently occurring musical elements with signs or symbols and by omitting certain elements such as embellishments used to articulate or re-articulate notes. For the purpose of comparison, these orthographically simplified transcriptions are arranged in such a way that corresponding material is lined up according to principles outlined below (p.[359](#)), in order to show similarities and differences between the transcriptions. Once the individual phrases and notes are lined up, the transcriptions are compared on a number of levels.

On the basis of these comparisons, observations can be made between specific performers representing a number of lines of transmission. The central questions to be

addressed in the analysis are: do the transcriptions of performances support or refute the lines of transmission shown in a lineage chart based upon evidence such as oral histories and genealogies; and in what ways do the lines of transmission manifest themselves in the analysis of transcriptions of recordings by performers on the chart?

Comparisons will be made between a number of categories: between the Futaiken and Shôganken groups of pieces, between lineages, and between individual performers. Comparisons will be made on the basis of elements such as large scale structures and melodic contours (as encapsulated in orthographically simplified versions of the transcriptions), distinctive melodic, cadential formulae, and finally, details of the performances.

Patterns of transmission between the pieces represented in the ten performances are thus brought to light. These patterns occur in the ways in which musical elements are retained, omitted, or changed during transmission according to the performer, the lineage, and/or the group. At the highest level of detail, the largely musicological methods applied to the first levels of analysis become less appropriate. The second method of comparative analysis applied to the details of the performance has been developed from tradition-based models of describing *honkyoku*. This second method is similar to the way in which the phrases might be explained in a traditional teaching situation. It entails examining the process of performing the details of the pieces as they occur phrase by phrase.

I will show, largely by musicologically-based methods, that large-scale structural analysis of the transcriptions of the performances of ten *honkyoku* examined in this thesis confirms the genealogy constructed in Chapter 4: that the ten performances are essentially manifestations of what is conceptualized as “*Reibo*”, but that the ten performances can be divided into two groups which are in turn transmitted by basically two lineages or lines. In some cases, this commonality between the ten pieces has been forgotten or overlooked by some members of the *honkyoku* tradition. It is appropriate to use non-traditional methods to establish their shared identity.

The tradition-based method of analysis facilitates the observation of the elements of *honkyoku* most important to the members of the tradition. Meaningful comparisons of the “*Reibo*” pieces using this second method can be made, however, once the identity of the pieces has been established by the first method of analysis outlined above.

Before either the musicologically based or the tradition based comparative analysis can be made, it is necessary to explain the method of acquiring and organizing the analytical data. The following discussions explain the methods of transcription and how the transcriptions are used as data for comparison, after which the analyses of the data will be presented.

6.3.1 The Recordings

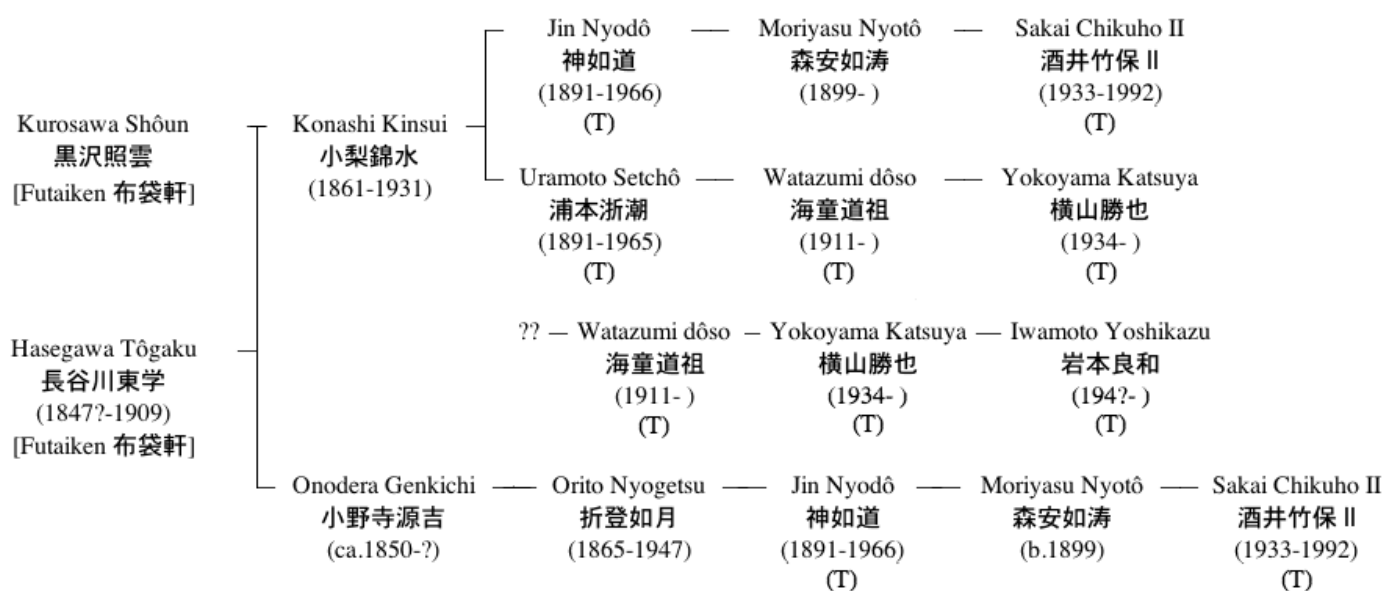
The data used to analyze the “*Reibo*” pieces at the three levels of the first, musicologically-based method outlined above are derived from transcriptions of recordings of performances of the pieces. Both philosophical and practical issues

pertaining to the transcribing of *honkyoku* have been discussed above (p.310-315). A detailed examination of the transcription methods used in this thesis is undertaken below. Transcriptions of recordings of six performers, Uramoto, Watazumi, Yokoyama, Iwamoto, Jin, and Sakai playing pieces known as “*Reibo*”, “*Futaiken den ‘Reibo’*”, “*Futaiken reibo*”, “*Shôganken den ‘Reibo’*”, “*Shôganken reibo*”, and “*Furin*” form the basis for the analysis in this thesis.

According to the lineage chart constructed in Chapter 4, all of these pieces, with the exception of Watazumi’s “*Furin*”, can be traced back to one player, Hasegawa Tôgaku of the Ôshû district of northern Japan, who performed a piece which may have been called “*Reibo*”. Watazumi’s “*Reibo*” is also an exception because he does not acknowledge Uramoto as his teacher, although the genealogy chart indicates that Uramoto taught Watazumi the piece. Implications of Watazumi’s exceptional position are manifested in many ways in the analysis (pp.404-418).

As explained in Chapter 4, the genealogy tracing these pieces and their exponents is based upon reliable data from within the *shakuhachi* tradition. In the discussion that follows, I will show that this genealogy, including Watazumi’s “*Furin*” and “*Reibo*”, is confirmed by the analysis. Through the analysis, I will further argue that some of the specific lines of transmission recorded in the lineage chart are reflected in many aspects of the performances.

Chart 7



Performers whose recordings are transcribed are marked “(T)”.

The ten recordings represent two groups of pieces and two lineages of *honkyoku* performers. Groups “A” and “B” are two distinct versions the piece “*Reibo*” of the Ôshû district. These two versions or groups of pieces will be referred to in the analysis as the “*Futaiken reibo*” group and the “*Shôganken reibo*” group in accordance with the findings of the genealogy. The transmission lines of [Konashi] -

Uramoto - Watazumi - Yokoyama¹¹⁵ and [Konashi] - Jin – Sakai¹¹⁶ are represented in group “A”. The transmission lines of Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto and Jin-Sakai are represented in group “B”. [Chart 7](#) gives the genealogy of the ten performances in question. The details of the ten recordings are presented below:

Recordings in Group “A”

1.	Uramoto Setchô “ <i>Reibo</i> ” TRS-5084 Privately released LP recording	1985
2.	Watazumi dôso “ <i>Reibo</i> ” Crown SW-5006. LP recording	1968
3.	Yokoyama Katsuya “ <i>Reibo</i> ” Ongaku Tomo no Sha OMC1912. Cassette recording	1985
4.	Jin Nyodô “ <i>Futaiken den ‘Reibo’</i> ” Teichiku GM6007. LP recording	1980
5.	Sakai Chikuho II “ <i>Futaiken reibo</i> ” Adamu Êsu AAC-2001. LP recording	1978

Recordings in Group “B”

6.	Watazumi dôso “ <i>Furin</i> ” Phillips PH-7503 LP recording	1971
7.	Yokoyama Katsuya “ <i>Shôganken reibo</i> ” Ongaku Tomo no Sha OMC1912 Cassette recording	1985
8.	Iwamoto Yoshikazu “ <i>Furin</i> ” NHK (Japan National Radio) 17 November Radio broadcast	1975
9.	Jin Nyodô “ <i>Shôganken den ‘Reibo’</i> ” Teichiku GM6007. LP recording	1980
10.	Sakai Chikuho II “ <i>Shôganken reibo</i> ” Columbia KX7002. LP recording	1974

The recordings are part of a collection of twenty-nine recordings of “*Reibo*” pieces

¹¹⁵ As discussed above (p.349), Watazumi refutes the suggestion made by many members of the tradition that Uramoto taught him the piece “*Reibo*”. The analysis to follow bears out, to a certain degree, his claim that Uramoto was not his “teacher”, as well as the seemingly contradictory belief that the piece “*Reibo*” was transmitted from Uramoto to Watazumi.

¹¹⁶ Jin did not teach Sakai directly, but rather transmitted both “*Futaiken reibo*” and “*Shôganken reibo*” through Sakai’s immediate teacher, Moriyasu Nyotô (森安如涛). Regrettably, recordings of Moriyasu do not appear to exist.

from the Ôshu district in my possession.¹¹⁷ The ten recordings chosen for analysis from this group were selected because they represent two lineages over two or three generations which have each transmitted two versions of the “*Reibo*” piece. Another major consideration in their selection is my being the recipient of both the two groups of pieces and the two lineages of performers.¹¹⁸ Besides the obvious personal interest and satisfaction I stand to gain from such a choice, I would argue that my intimate understanding as a performer of each of the two lineages and two groups is not only desirable but imperative in order to successfully analyze them (see p.369). This is particularly important for the second tradition-based method of analysis. The necessity to rely in part upon one’s knowledge as a performer for the musicologically based method of analysis will also become clear.

Throughout this thesis, the importance of the experience of performing *honkyoku* has been emphasized. If a transcription is to provide accurate data about a *honkyoku*, it must represent the process of the performance as well as the sound product. Such a transcription demands an intimate knowledge possessed only by one who can perform the piece.

6.3.2 Transcription Method

The transcriptions of the ten recordings of the Ôshû family of the piece “*Reibo*” attempt to embody the process of performing the pieces as well as the notes produced, in particular the processes involved in playing *meri* and *kari* notes (see p.265). There are, for example, at least five different combinations of fingerings and *meri/kari* techniques all of which produce the pitch g' (on a standard length 1.8 *shaku* flute) (Table 1). Each of the combinations produce sounds that are the same pitch but that are distinct in timbre and other qualities such as the sound produced when they are re-articulated.

In notation systems such as western staff notation, which denote pitch and rhythm but in which timbre and fingering technique are not integral to the system, the differences between the five playing methods mentioned above are not easily represented. While it might be possible to notate some of the playing methods with the use of double sharps, double flats, and a combination of sharps and flats, the result would be unclear and misleading in terms of tonality. Figure 19 illustrates some of the problems of staff notation using only sharps and flats in attempting to transcribe passages of *honkyoku* that contain *meri/kari* techniques.

In the transcriptions in this thesis, the *meri/kari* processes are reflected in the notation by the use of coloured note heads; blue note heads are *meri* notes and orange note heads are *kari* notes. The important distinction is immediately apparent in the transcription between notes that are identical in pitch but that are produced with

¹¹⁷ Many of the recordings were collected in Japan in 1988-1989, with the assistance of Ms. Tukitani and the *Syakuhati kenkyûkai* (尺八研究会, ‘Shakuhachi Research Group’).

¹¹⁸ Sakai taught me his versions of what he called “*Shôganken reibo*” and “*Futaiken reibo*” between the years 1973 and 1975, and Yokoyama taught me his versions of what he called “*Shôganken reibo*” and “*Reibo*” in 1989.

contrasting *meri/kari* techniques. Figure 20 shows transcriptions of the preceding examples, but with the use of colour to indicate the *meri/kari* processes. Not only is the transcription more readable, but one aspect of the process of performance, the *meri/kari* techniques, becomes readily apparent.

It is important to point out that the choice of colours, blue for *meri* and orange for *kari*, is consistent with the philosophical symbolism of the *yin/yang* duality underlying the *meri/kari* techniques. As explained elsewhere (p.269), *meri* notes represent *yin* (earth, night, darkness, female, softness), while *kari* notes represent *yang* (heaven, day, light, male, hardness). The colour blue is appropriate for representing the *meri* (*yin*) notes, while the colour orange is appropriate for representing the *kari* (*yang*) notes.

The second major weakness of staff notation in transcribing performances of *honkyoku* is that of rhythm. The precise rhythmical markings based upon metrical beats of the staff notation system are inappropriate for notating the “free” rhythms of indeterminate meter of classical *honkyoku*. In the transcriptions in this thesis, durations are indicated both spatially and by using modified rhythmical markings of staff notation. Durations are indicated linearly on the staff with one centimetre representing one second in time. Accordingly, a note that is held eight seconds, is separated from the subsequent note by eight centimetres. One staff line, being about sixteen centimetres in length, represents approximately sixteen seconds of real-time performance, while one page of transcription represents a little over two minutes of performance. The accuracy of this method of representing duration is obviously not exceedingly high, especially in the case of notes of very short durations. It does, however, give an immediate and easily understood indication of the relative lengths of notes and phrases.

The spatial representation is reinforced by the use of the standard rhythmical markings of staff notation, which have been arbitrarily assigned the following values. Semibreves are used to indicate notes with durations of over four seconds. Minims indicate durations between two and four seconds. Crotchets indicate durations between one and two seconds. Quavers indicate durations between one and one-half seconds and semiquavers indicate durations of less than a half second.

The modified rhythmical markings, which make no differentiation between a note held four seconds and one held fourteen, are less precise than the spatial representation of durations, but only when judged by western musicological criteria. Their very imprecision in fact mirrors the “insider’s” way of looking at duration: in the performer’s mind, a note with a “long duration” is held a “long time”, not “four seconds” or “eight seconds”. How long the note ends up being held depends upon the circumstances of the individual performer and performance. The two complementary systems of notating duration in the transcriptions allow for both an “objective” musicological and a “subjective” insider way of viewing the music.

The performers of the ten recordings used a variety of lengths of *shakuhachi*. In order to facilitate the comparison of the performances, the transcriptions are transposed so that the fundamental pitch (the lowest pitch produced with all finger holes closed) of all instruments equals the pitch D above middle C. *Honkyoku*, when performed on a standard length 1.8 *shaku*, employ primarily the *miyako bushi* mode, consisting of the

pitches D, E-flat, G, A-flat, and C, or the pitches D, E-flat, G, A, and B-flat. In other words, when the pitches D, G, and C occur, they are almost always natural, and when E and B occur they are almost always flattened. The pitch A occurs both as A-flat and A-natural.

The consistent flattening of the pitches E and B suggests the use of a key signature in order to eliminate the majority of accidentals that would otherwise occur in the transcriptions. Therefore, the two flats, E-flat and B-flat, appear in the key signature of the transcriptions, but not in the order traditionally assigned to them. Writing the E-flat before the B-flat is my attempt to avoid the standard interpretation of key signatures and their harmonic implications. Finally, A-flat does not appear in the key signature even though the pitch A-flat frequently occurs in the transcriptions, because A-natural also appears with regularity. In contrast, E-natural and B-natural are almost non-existent.

The transcriptions have also accommodated the *honkyoku* performing tradition by not notating any “grace note” caused by the standard technique used in *shakuhachi* playing to repeat or re-articulate a note. In performing traditional *shakuhachi* music, this technique replaces tonguing to repeat a note.¹¹⁹ The technique is nearly identical to what is used in the performance of bagpipes (where tonguing is impossible), and involves the rapid opening and closing, or hitting, of a finger hole, producing an extremely brief sound in between the notes being repeated. Although these sounds could be considered grace notes and notated as such in the staff notation system, they are neither conceived of nor heard as grace notes in the *honkyoku* tradition. Non-standard techniques used to repeat notes are noted in the transcription.

In the course of performing, the finger hole opened and closed, or hit, is determined according to the note being repeated. This standard system is one of the first things a *shakuhachi* player learns as a beginner. The standard repeats are neither notated nor discussed in traditional *shakuhachi* notation. They are not considered “notes”. For these reasons, and in order to make the transcriptions more legible, the standard re-articulations are not notated.

In *honkyoku* performance, however, there are alternative re-articulations. Finger holes other than those used for standard re-articulations are opened and closed, or hit, or combinations of techniques are used to repeat notes. In contrast to the standard re-articulations, which pass without comment in a lesson, these alternative re-articulations are emphasized in *honkyoku* lessons and are frequently notated in traditional scores. Sounds produced by re-articulations other than those that are standard will therefore be notated in the transcriptions.

Likewise, articulations used to stress the beginning of notes are executed by striking or lifting one or more finger holes. Again, tonguing is never used in *honkyoku* performances to articulate a note. These beginning articulations are common, but unlike re-articulations, there are no standard methods of articulating notes which are internalized by the beginner *shakuhachi* player. These articulations are notated in the transcriptions.

¹¹⁹ Tonguing is used only in playing certain modern pieces dating from the 20th century.

With the above minor changes to the staff notation system, it is possible to transcribe *honkyoku* in such a way that the important features of the music are retained in a form that is relatively easily and widely understood. The transcriptions of the recordings of the ten performances mentioned above can be found in Appendix 1.

6.3.3 The Orthographically Simplified Transcription

Once the transcriptions are completed, the second step towards a comparative analysis is the simplification of the transcription for the purpose of comparison. This simplification allows the phrases and the notes within the phrases to be lined up. In this thesis, the transcriptions are simplified by a systematic replacement of frequently occurring musical elements with signs or symbols, and by the elimination of details that are not musically significant. It is important to note that the result is a simplified orthography that facilitates comparison but does not eliminate significant detail.

Many of the details of the original transcriptions are utilized in the final analysis, but tend to hide the elements being looked for at this level. The simplified transcription is derived by making the following changes in the original transcriptions:

Coloured note heads indicating instances of *meri* and *kari* techniques are also retained in the melodic contour. With the above changes in the transcribed score, the broad melodic contour of the pieces can be more readily observed and the pieces in question compared.¹²⁰ Similarities and differences between the transcriptions on a macro level are used to draw conclusions about the large scale structure of the “*Reibo*” pieces, about the degree of change and the plausibility of the claim of shared origins between pieces. It will be seen that both similarities and differences between the transcriptions of the ten performances support the findings of the research into lineages as shown in the genealogy chart. Furthermore, the location of similar and different musical material in the transcriptions validates the claims by many members of the *shakuhachi* tradition that the transmission of *honkyoku* in general and the Ôshû “*Reibo*” pieces in particular is largely oral in nature. The orthographically simplified transcriptions of the ten performances of “*Reibo*” are found in Appendix 2.

6.3.4 Lining up the Orthographically Simplified Transcriptions

Once the ten transcriptions representing the recorded performances are simplified orthographically, attempts can be made to arrange the transcriptions so that a location in one transcription can be compared with a corresponding location in another transcription. The lineage chart discussed in Chapter 4 (p.192) suggests the possibility of arranging the transcriptions so that one might assume that phrases in one transcription are lined up with the corresponding phrases in the other transcriptions. A successful attempt to line up most of the data provided by the transcriptions would largely validate, independently of any data used to create the lineage chart, the conclusion of the lineage chart that the ten versions all share a common identity,

¹²⁰ See pp.569-594 for the orthographically simplified transcriptions of the “*Reibo*” pieces.

which in this case can be traced back to the “*Reibo*” as transmitted by the *komusô* Hasegawa Tôgaku.

The musical material of the ten transcriptions at first seemed hopelessly confusing in both the degree of divergence and the repetition of material. The method of organization I found most successful relies heavily upon my practical knowledge of the pieces as a recipient of four of the versions.

The first step toward arranging the simplified transcriptions in the manner described above is to look at those traditional scores which label the placement of formal divisions. Beginnings and ends of formal sections are marked in the traditional scores of three of the pieces in one group and two of the pieces in the other group. These traditional markings can be used to determine the beginnings and ends of the formal sections in all ten of the pieces, which in turn can become the starting point from which to line up the transcriptions.

In the traditionally notated scores of “*Shôganken reibo*” as transmitted by Jin, Sakai, and Yokoyama (transcribed by Furuya Teruo 古屋輝夫), six sections are clearly marked and named. The names of these sections, which are identical in the three versions are: *Take shirabe* [竹調] (‘bamboo searching’), *Honte* [本手] (‘original pattern’), *Takane* [高音] (‘high sound’), *Takane gaeshi* [高音返し] (‘repeating the high sound’), *Hachi gaeshi* [鉢返し] (‘returning the bowl’), and *Musubi* [結] (‘closing’).

Tukitani describes the six sections as follows:

Take shirabe [竹調] (‘bamboo searching’): a sedate introductory section, suggesting the atmosphere of the entire piece, and introducing certain motifs.

Honte [本手] (‘original pattern’): the section presenting the main motifs of the piece such as the “*Reibo*” theme. This theme varies slightly with each piece.

Takane [高音] (‘high sound’): a beautiful melodic line beginning in and descending from the highest register, followed by a repetition of the main theme of the *honte* section.

Takane gaeshi [高音返し] (‘high sound returning’): a repeat of the *takane* section, with a variation of the *honte* section.

Here, the *komusô* would return the bowl, having received the alms, and perform the following section as a sign of gratitude.¹²¹

¹²¹ Tukitani here refers to the practice of mendicancy performed by *komusô*. The most common form of alms received by the mendicant priests was uncooked rice, brought out in a bowl (*hachi*). The priest, stopping in the middle of performing the *honkyoku*, would empty the bowl of rice into his collection bag, and then return the bowl to his benefactor. The *komusô* would then continue playing, performing the section, “Returning the bowl”.

Hachi gaeshi [鉢返し] (‘returning the bowl’): a transposition¹²² of the theme, using the *tamane* [玉音] (‘ball-like sound’) technique.¹²³ This section is a “change” within the piece as a whole.

Musubi [結] (‘closing’): a short concluding section, played in the high register, though many variants finish in the low register.

(Tukitani 1990b:15)

The location of these divisions in the transcriptions corresponding to the scores that indicate them is facilitated by the close correlation between the performances and the corresponding scores. For example, the number of phrases notated in the score used by Sakai is identical to the number of phrases in the transcription of Sakai’s performance.

Once the divisions are located in the transcriptions of the three “*Shôganken reibo*” pieces performed by those using traditional notation with the divisions labelled, it is possible to look for the formal divisions in the transcriptions of the remaining two performances included in the “*Shôganken reibo*” group, those of Watazumi and Iwamoto.¹²⁴ On the basis of the conclusions made upon examining the endings and beginnings of the divisions in the above three transcriptions, one can determine where the divisions exist in the other two pieces. The remarkable extent of agreement between these two transcriptions and the first three transcriptions above, including cadential formulae shared by all five transcriptions, is sufficient to locate the formal divisions in the latter two transcriptions with relative certainty. The cadential formulae will be discussed below (pp.379-382).

Figure 22 shows parts of the transcriptions of the five performances of the “*Shôganken reibo*” pieces, which correspond to segments of the initial and final phrases of the formal divisions of the piece, whose location has been substantiated by the three traditional scores of “*Shôganken reibo*” mentioned above. In the transcriptions of all five performances, all but one of the sections ends on the pitch D, which is the fundamental note of the instrument (on a 1.8 *shaku* length flute), that is one of the primary core tones (*kakuon*) in the *honkyoku* (see p.316). The final *musubi* section is the exception. In the case of the ending of the *musubi* section (which corresponds to the end of the piece), there is likewise a sustained D in all five transcriptions. In the three transcriptions representing the Watazumi lineage (Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto), however, a final phrase, which ends on the pitch A and which is not present in the Jin-Sakai transcriptions, is added after the

¹²² Tukitani is not clear in her use of the word “transposition” (転調, *tenchô*) here. In musical terms, the word can also mean “modulation” and “transition”.

¹²³ The *tamane* technique is similar to flutter tonguing, except that the uvula is “fluttered” instead of the tongue. The result is a softer sound.

¹²⁴ Though Watazumi and Iwamoto use the title “*Furin*” for their pieces, they are initially included in the “*Shôganken reibo*” group. Their inclusion is based on the oral and written information used to assemble the genealogy chart (see Chapter 4). Data derived from the transcriptions, beginning with the initial and final phrases of the formal divisions, discussed here, validate their placement in the “*Shôganken reibo*” group.

phrase with the sustained D. The implications of this difference will be addressed below (p.378).

For the most part, the formal divisions, as notated in the traditional scores, substantiate the hypothesis that the five transcriptions represent pieces that are closely related, if not the same. The similarity of material that can be found at the beginnings and endings of what are believed to be the formal divisions clearly establishes their location in all five transcriptions.

Having established the location of the formal divisions in the five transcriptions of the “*Shôganken reibo*” group, the same process can be applied to the “*Futaiken reibo*” group of pieces.¹²⁵ In contrast to the case of “*Shôganken reibo*”, the formal divisions of the piece “*Futaiken reibo*” are labelled only in the traditional scores of Jin and Sakai. Furthermore, there are only five sections instead of six. The five sections of “*Futaiken reibo*” as found in the scores of Jin and Sakai are *Take shirabe*, *Honte*, *Takane*, *Hachi gaeshi*, and *Musubi*. As in the case of “*Shôganken reibo*”, the location of these divisions in the transcriptions of Jin and Sakai’s performances and the corresponding locations in the transcriptions of the remaining three performances can be pinpointed with relative certainty due to the high degree of similarity between the five transcriptions.¹²⁶ Figure 23 shows the initial and final phrase segments of the divisions in the five “*Futaiken reibo*” transcriptions as marked in traditional scores.

Similar divisional markings can be found in traditional scores representing other lineages of “*Reibo*” pieces, although frequently with different titles. Scores of eight versions of the “*Reibo*” piece are included in the published *honkyoku* scores of Yamaue (Yamaue 1984). They exhibit the following variations from the above division of formal sections:

1. The piece “*Reibo*” of Futaiken (布袋軒, a sub-temple), as transmitted by Sakata Tôsui (坂田東水) through Sanô Tôkai (佐野東界), is divided into *take shirabe*, *ichi no takane* (high sound 1), *ni no takane* (high sound 2), *san no takane* (high sound 3).
2. The piece “*Reibo*” of Futaiken, as transmitted by Konashi Kinsui (小梨錦水) through Goto Tôsui (後藤桃水), is divided into *take shirabe*, *taki otoshi* (瀧落シ, falling waterfall), *take ne* (*taki otoshi no uchi*) (high sound within the falling waterfall [section]), *hachigaeshi*, and *tsuyu kiri* (露切, literally ‘cutting the dew’).¹²⁷

¹²⁵ The five pieces grouped under the name “*Futaiken reibo*” are Jin’s “*Futaiken den ‘Reibo’*”, Sakai’s “*Futaiken reibo*” and Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto’s “*Reibo*”. The grouping together of these five pieces is initially dictated by the written and oral information used to derive the “*Reibo*” lineage chart (see Chapter 4), and, as with the “*Shôganken reibo*” group, data from transcriptions validate the grouping.

¹²⁶ Though the label *takane gaeshi* does not occur in either of the traditional scores of “*Futaiken reibo*”, musical material that corresponds to varying degrees to the *takane gaeshi* sections of the “*Shôganken reibo*” pieces can be found in all five versions of the “*Futaiken reibo*” transcriptions. Discussion of this will be deferred until later (see p.374).

¹²⁷ The term *tsuyu kiri* is occasionally used to denote the final section of a *honkyoku*. The “dew” refers to the condensation that forms inside the *shakuhachi* while playing.

3. The piece “*Reibo*” of Futaiken, (also called “*Miyagino Reibo*” 宮城野鈴慕) as transmitted by Konashi Kinsui through Kobayashi Shizan (小林紫山), is divided into *take shirabe*, *taki otoshi*, *takane*, and *hachigaeshi*.
4. The piece “*Reibo*” of Futaiken, as transmitted by Konashi Kinsui through Uramoto Setchô (浦本浙潮) and then Tanikita Muchiku (谷北無竹), is divided into *take shirabe*, *taki otoshi*, *ichi no takane*, *ni no takane*, and *hachigaeshi*.
5. The piece “*Reibo*” of Kinjôji (金城寺, a temple) and Garyôken (臥龍軒, a sub-temple), as transmitted by Hasegawa Tôgaku (長谷川東學) through Onodera Genkichi (小野寺源吉) and then Orito Nyogetsu (折登如月), and also transmitted by Takahashi Kûsan (高橋空山), is divided into *take shirabe*, *reibo (honte)*, *takane*, *honkyoku* (main piece), and *hachigaeshi*.
6. The piece “*Reibo*” of Shôganken (a sub-temple), as transmitted by Jin Nyodô (神如道) is divided into *take shirabe*, *honte (reibo)*, *takane*, *honkyoku*, and *hachigaeshi*.
7. The piece “*Ôshû reibo*” as transmitted by Tsuruta Nandô (鶴田南童) has no formal divisions.
8. The piece “*Bôno reibo*” (芒野鈴慕) is divided into an unnamed introductory section, *takane*, a second *takane*, and an unnamed concluding section (Yamaue 1984:12-35).

Finally, in the book, *Kinpû ryû honkyoku den* (錦風流尺八本曲伝, ‘Transmission of Kimpû ryû shakuhachi honkyoku’) (Uchiyama 1972:77-78), the score of the piece “*Miyagi reibo*” (宮城鈴慕) as transmitted by Onodera Genkichi is given as divided into *shirabe*, *reibo*, *honkyoku kaeshi*, and *hachigaeshi*.

The majority of the above names of formal divisions of “*Reibo*” pieces coincide with those of the “*Shôganken reibo*” and “*Futaiken reibo*” groups examined earlier. [Table 2](#) summarizes the sections as found in the ten versions of the “*Reibo*” pieces studied in this thesis and comparing them with the sections named in the nine traditional scores mentioned above. Similarities between the formal divisions are apparent, despite differences in naming the divisions. In particular the use of the names *Reibo*, *Honte* and *Taki otoshi* to indicate the section after the *Shirabe* section, further substantiate the hypothesis that they are all pieces belonging to the “*Reibo*” family.

Once the beginnings and endings of the various sections of all ten transcriptions have been located, it is possible to begin organizing for comparative analysis, the remaining portions of the transcriptions, that is, the material between the beginning and ending of each division. Immediately apparent are the notes that are core tones (see p.316), that is, the pitches D, G, A, and C. A number of these core tones are sustained for over two seconds. Figure 24 shows a page of the lined up orthographically simplified transcriptions with a box drawn around all of the core tones held for two seconds or more.

In a few cases, especially in passages in the upper register, there are sustained notes in the different transcriptions that are also easily lined up. These notes, however, being the pitches A-flat, B-flat and E-flat, are not core tones. These pitches, which are

usually performed with the *meri* technique, are almost always played using the *kari* technique when in the context of obvious correlation.

After the beginnings and ends of formal sections and the core tones are lined up, the remaining intervening notes can then be scrutinized. In many cases, distinctive melodic formulae can be used to line up the transcriptions. These distinctive features or melodic formulae act as the “signposts” which are known to operate in remembering oral music (Treitler 1974:344-345) (see p.220). The most obvious melodic formula is the *reibo no te* (鈴慕の手, the “‘Reibo’ pattern’ or ‘fingering’).

The term *reibo no te* is used by members of the *honkyoku* tradition in talking about “Reibo” in the context of lessons and elsewhere. The *reibo no te* is a pattern of notes which may be less than a phrase, an entire phrase or more than one phrase. It is always in the upper octave range (甲, *kan*), is predominately performed with the *meri* technique, is usually characterized by a density of notes far greater than the average, and has elaborate ornamentation.

The pattern of notes centres primarily around the pitch g" and to a lesser degree a-flat", and frequently concludes with the pitches e-flat" and d". One difficulty in defining a phrase as *reibo no te* is the frequent occurrence of what could be called fragments of *reibo no te*, e.g., without the e-flat" - d", often within phrases that contain non-*reibo no te* material as well (see the latter half of S:Y39).¹²⁸ In this study, material will be termed as *reibo no te* only in places that were so defined to me.

Variations of *reibo no te* occur repeatedly in all ten versions of “Reibo” transcribed in this study. Figure 25 gives two examples of *reibo no te* from the transcriptions used in this study. The two examples are from recordings of performances by the same person (Watazumi), and represent both the “*Shôganken reibo*” and the “*Futaiken reibo*” groups. They show the extremes the *reibo no te* pattern can have in length and complexity.

Melodic passages considered *reibo no te* are labelled and discussed as such in the *honkyoku* tradition, for example during lessons. Because the notes in *reibo no te* are usually not core tones and are of extremely short duration, the placement of the *reibo no te* passages are most helpful in collating material that are neither beginnings and ends of formal divisions nor core tones. All of the *reibo no te* are marked with brackets in the completed lining up of the orthographically simplified transcription.

There is some material in the orthographically simplified transcriptions which does not fit in any of the three categories mentioned thus far: beginnings and ends of sections, core tones, and distinctive melodic formulae. The less obvious the correlation between notes becomes, the more arbitrary the decision becomes to determine their placement. Notes that do not seem to line up with any notes in other versions are given an isolated position.

¹²⁸ In the analysis, specific phrases of individual performers are denoted by either F or S followed by the initial of the performer, and then the number of the phrase or phrases. For example, S:Y39 is phrase 39 of Yokoyama’s version of “*Shôganken reibo*”.

It soon became apparent that my attempt to line up the transcriptions would not succeed without relying on my intimate and intuitive understanding of the piece as a recipient, performer, and teacher of four of the ten versions. The choice of notes or phrases to use as correlative “signposts”, which most likely corresponded with each other and between which the other notes had to fall, could in many instances only be made with such an understanding. Yet once those choices were made, the high degree of correlation between the transcribed material which remained to be lined up reinforced the original decisions. In all phases of the arrangement of the transcriptions the two groups of pieces, “*Shôganken reibo*” and “*Futaiken reibo*”, are dealt with separately, as explained in the case of lining up of the beginnings and endings of formal divisions. Only after the correlation of the pieces within each group is independently established are the notes from the pieces of both of the two groups lined up. It should also be noted here that the various levels of material used to line up the simplified transcriptions confirm each other. For example, the placement of the core tones confirms the locations of the formal divisions and distinctive melodic formulae. Likewise, the locations of the distinctive melodic formulas confirm the placement of both of the previous levels of core tones and formal divisions.

The successful arrangement of the ten transcriptions confirms a common identity shared by the ten pieces represented in the transcriptions, as is strongly suggested by the genealogy chart. To what extent and in what ways the common identity is manifested in the ten transcriptions, and how they are related to the lines of transmission are addressed in the analysis.

The completely lined up orthographically simplified transcriptions of the ten recordings can be found in Appendix 3.

6.4 Comparative Analysis of “*Reibo*”

Although the impetus behind a comparative analysis of the melodic contours and the details of the “*Reibo*” pieces comes largely from a musicological perspective, the methodology of the analysis relies very much on a tradition-based understanding of the pieces. The method of analysis used in establishing contours is based upon knowledge of, and processes found within, the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition in its execution.

With the large data base of the transcriptions of ten recordings, representing the lineages, generations, and individual performers outlined earlier, comparisons will be made on a number of levels, and between a number of subjects in a number of combinations:

1. Between the two groups of “*Reibo*” pieces (the “*Futaiken reibo*” group vs. the “*Shôganken reibo*” group) in order to show similarities and differences which define the two groups.
2. Between the two lineages within each of the two groups of pieces (the FR versions of the Watazumi-Yokoyama lineage vs. the FR versions of the Jin-Sakai lineage, and the SR versions of Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto

- vs. the SR versions of the Jin-Sakai lineage) in order to show the level of consistency between performers within the same lineage.
- 3. Between individual performers of different lineages within the same group (Jin's FR version vs. Uramoto's FR version). In this and the following combination of comparisons, patterns of variation between individuals can be seen.
- 4. Between individual performers within the same lineages (Uramoto's FR version vs. Watazumi's FR version).

The comparisons focus upon the similarities and differences between such elements as formal divisions, the placement and frequency of core notes (see p.[366](#)), the location and execution of cadential and other distinctive melodic formulae, the details of performance such as attacks and re-articulations, and the details of pitch.

Through the comparisons, the following questions can be addressed: In what ways can the two groups of "*Reibo*" be defined? Given the ten different performers representing two different lineages within the two different groups of pieces, what patterns of similarities and differences can be seen? How are these patterns related to the transmission between the performers, and to the issue of stability and change? To what extent do patterns occur which support or refute what is known about individual performers and their beliefs concerning the nature and essence of *honkyoku*?

Before such comparisons can be made, however, it is necessary to clearly establish that the ten performances represented by the transcriptions share similarities and differences to a degree that indicates that they are all identifiable as valid manifestations of "*Reibo*". The genealogy charts (see pp.[173-196](#)) have already suggested this, which has been further substantiated by the successful arrangement of the orthographically simplified transcriptions (see pp.[569-594](#)).

6.4.1 Establishing a Common Identity for the Ten Pieces Using Data from the Transcriptions

In the context of theories of orality (pp.[218-223](#)), "*Reibo*" is not a single piece. There is neither an "original" "*Reibo*", nor versions of an "original" "*Reibo*" piece. There is no single underlying text of "*Reibo*". In trying to establish whether or not the performances represented by the ten transcriptions are all identifiable as "*Reibo*", one must look at the amount and placement of shared material. The more material that is common to all ten of the transcriptions, the more likelihood of a shared identity. If the shared material includes such important material as core notes, beginnings and endings of formal sections and distinctive melodic formulae, then this likelihood gains even more credence.

A great deal of shared material between the ten pieces can be seen in the arrangement of the orthographically simplified transcriptions described previously (pp.[359-369](#)). Particularly significant are notes sustained for long durations. In Figure 26, it can be seen that certain notes of long duration in the first seven to thirteen phrases of the initial *shirabe* section are shared by the majority of the pieces. These are arranged in the same way as in the orthographically simplified transcriptions in the previous

section. Notes appear only if identical notes are found in at least six among all ten of the “*Reibo*” versions, and the note in at least one of the versions has a minimum duration value of a minim (i.e., at least two seconds in length). Most of the phrases in the *shirabe* section of all ten transcriptions share at least one of these notes. A similar degree of shared material can be seen throughout the entire piece.

In addition to the notes of long duration discussed above, other material supports the idea of a common identity of the ten pieces, in particular the material at the beginnings and ends of formal divisions ([Table 3](#)). The following observations can be made regarding the main divisions of “*Reibo*”.

In all ten performances of the “*Reibo*” piece except that of Uramoto, the *take shirabe* section ends on the fundamental note of the instrument (d') (Figure 27). The *honte* section, which follows the *take shirabe* section, begins on the first octave above the fundamental note (d'') in all performances. This division is one of the most easily recognized in the transcriptions in both groups.

It was stated earlier (p.[364](#)) that the “*Futaiken reibo*” group has only five sections marked in the traditional scores, while the “*Shôganken reibo*” group has six. This is because there is no formal division marked in the traditional scores at the location in the FR pieces which corresponds to the location of the division between the *honte* and *takane* sections in the SR pieces (see [Table 3](#)). The final phrase of the *honte* section of the SR pieces ends on d'' (Figure 28). The FR phrase, which should correspond to the final phrase of the “*Shôganken reibo*” *honte* section, ends on g''. Both of these notes are “core notes” (see p.[316](#)), and are important in their function as cadential endings or “tonics” (see the discussion of orality, pp.[218-223](#)).

These notes are held for over four seconds in all of the FR pieces and for over two seconds in all of the SR pieces. Therefore, it is reasonable to draw a parallel between the g'' of the FR pieces and the d'' of the SR pieces at this point. Furthermore, the following phrase in FR follows the same melodic line as the corresponding SR phrase, that is, the beginning phrase of the SR *takane* section. One may therefore conclude that there is a division in the FR pieces at a point which corresponds to the end of the *honte* section and the beginning of the *takane* section in the SR pieces, even though this division is not labelled in the traditional scores. If we count this unmarked division, the number of formal divisions of the “*Futaiken reibo*” pieces become equal to the six marked divisions of the “*Shôganken reibo*” pieces.

As shown in Figure 29, what is labelled the final phrase of the *honte* section of FR in the traditional scores, corresponds to the final phrase of the *takane* section of SR (see [Table 3](#)). Though the names of the sections differ between the two groups at this point, the cadential and initial formulae at this formal division are related to each other. In all ten versions, there is a sustained (over four seconds) d'' at this point, followed by a short melodic figure in all of the SR versions, and a brief final note in Jin's FR version.

What is called the *takane* section of FR is labelled the *takane gaeshi* of SR (see [Table 3](#)). In the five FR pieces, the main note of the initial phrase of this section is g''. In the SR pieces, the g'' phrase does not occur. There is, however agreement between the SR group and three versions of the FR group in the subsequent material, beginning with

the note b-flat", followed by a long c"". These three are the third phrase of the *takane* section of both Watazumi (F:W52) and Yokoyama (F:Y51) and the second phrase of Sakai (F:S31). After the long c"", which is found in eight of the ten transcriptions, all ten versions coincide with phrases that play between d"" and e-flat"", resolving on c"".

The final phrase of the *takane* section in the FR versions (F:U33, etc.) and the *takane gaeshi* section in the SR versions (S:W 47, etc.) (Figure 30) resolves on a sustained d". In all ten versions, the d" is followed by the short melodic figures discussed in more detail below (see p.[379](#)).

In all ten versions, the section following the above division ending is labelled the *hachigaeshi* section (Figure 30). Also in all ten versions, this section begins with a distinctively intense b-flat" played with the *kari* technique, followed by variations of an oscillation between a" and b-flat".

In the FR versions, the ending of the *hachigaeshi* section and the beginning of the *musubi* section occurs at F:U38, according to divisions mentioned in the scores of Jin and Sakai (Figure 31). Though there is no sectional division labelled at this point in the SR versions, the corresponding phrase in the SR versions (S:W59, etc.) also begins with the pitch g'. In two of the versions (Watazumi and Jin) the note is sustained over four seconds. Material in this phrase in the SR group parallels that of the FR group. One might therefore conclude that there is a weak unlabelled division at this point in the SR group, which corresponds to the beginning of the *musubi* section of the FR group (see [Table 3](#)).

Though there is less correlation between the beginnings and endings of the *musubi* section of the two groups of pieces than can be observed in the rest of the piece, in the context of this discussion it is important to observe that both groups have final sections identically labelled as the *musubi* section.

The data in the transcriptions at the locations of the beginnings and endings of formal divisions manifest to a great extent a common overall structure shared by all ten of the performances. The amount and type of similarity seen between the ten transcriptions at these points also correspond to characteristics in tune with theories of orality regarding structural points (see pp.[218-223](#)). The degree of similarity at the points immediately before and after the divisions between large scale structures in the pieces, especially the frequent occurrence of shared cadential formulae, is also in accord with theories of orality, in particular where pertaining to the use of salient features and the beginnings and ends as focal points in the process of constructing the oral performance (see p.[221](#)).

The material at the formal divisions substantiates the observation concerning notes of long duration shared by all ten performances discussed above. A third indication that the ten performances are all manifestations of "*Reibo*" is the existence and location of the distinctive melodic formula described earlier, *reibo no te* (p.[368](#)). This formula can be found in all ten of the transcriptions. [Table 4](#) summarizes the occurrences of *reibo no te* within the formal divisions of the ten performances. Though there are differences between the details of the various *reibo no te*, for the most part they occur in the same places in all ten of the pieces.

Two of the discrepancies between the ten transcriptions in the occurrences of *reibo no te* underline the differences between the two groups of pieces. In the *hachigaeshi* section, a single *reibo no te* occurs in all five of the SR versions, but in none of the FR versions. Also in the *musubi* section, one *reibo no te* occurs in four of the FR versions, but not in any of the SR versions.

Some of the other differences in the occurrences of *reibo no te* indicate patterns of variation other than those related to the two groups. For example, the second occurrence of *reibo no te* in both the *honte* and the *takane* sections of the FR group is performed by the Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama lineage but not the Jin-Sakai lineage. Differences relating to lineages and other elements of transmission are discussed in the analyses to follow.

The above discussion presents ample evidence that the performances represented by the ten transcriptions used in this study are all manifestations of the piece “*Reibo*”, with both a great number of shared similarities and a substantial amount of possible cross-fertilization where differences occur. This was shown by the notes of long duration, the material at the formal divisions of the pieces, and the distinctive melodic formula known as *reibo no te*.

6.4.2 Comparison of the Two Groups, “*Futaiken reibo*” and “*Shôganken reibo*”

The previous section established a commonality between the performances represented by the ten transcriptions. This section focuses upon the differences that can be found between the two groups at the locations of the formal divisions, between cadential formulae and between other material that is present in one group but not the other. These differences are analyzed for relationships between the ten performances in order to show to what extent similarities and differences indicate patterns of variation that can be explained in terms of transmission.

Of all the divisions noted in traditional scores, the endings of the *hachigaeshi* sections and the beginnings of the *musubi* sections appear to bear the least correlation between the SR and FR groups. According to divisions marked in the Jin and Sakai scores, the final phrase of the FR *hachigaeshi* section (Figure 32) ends with a sustained d" followed by a short c", similar to patterns of other section endings. At this point, there is no division marked in any of the SR scores. The SR versions also have phrases ending on d" and c", but the d" in the SR versions is short in duration.

Variation amongst the SR versions can also be seen at this point. In Watazumi's SR, this phrase (S:W58) does not have the final c", while in Iwamoto's SR version (S:I58), the phrase ends on c", an octave higher than the others. As will be seen in the analyses that follow, Watazumi's versions of both the FR and SR groups most frequently diverge from the other versions. The versions of the other members of his lineage, that is Yokoyama and Iwamoto, also frequently exhibit differences.

In the FR versions, the following phrase (F:U39, etc.) (Figure 32), marks the start of the FR *musubi* section. In all but one of the FR versions the phrase begins with a sustained g', which is preceded by one or two notes of brief duration. Watazumi's FR

version is the exception (F:W78), omitting the g'. Immediately after the difference in the initial phrase, the Watazumi version parallels the other FR versions except Yokoyama's version, which omits a number of phrases at this point. The differences seen here between the performances not only differentiate the two groups, but also point to a number of other patterns of variation, discussed below, such as divergences within a single lineage, in this case, that of Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama.

The division between the *hachigaeshi* and *musubi* sections in the SR versions, as labelled in the Yokoyama, Jin, and Sakai scores, does not occur until several phrases later (S:W60) (Figure 33). The final phrase of the SR *hachigaeshi* section conforms with the cadential pattern c"-g' (see below, p.379). There is nothing in the FR versions to suggest a similar pattern or a cadential ending, a clear case of variation following the parameters of the group.

The SR *musubi* section begins with a b-flat", played with the *kari* technique, which then alternates in various patterns with a". In Yokoyama's version, the initial note is a", but the overall pattern is the same (S:Y67). No such *kari* b-flat" - a" pattern can be seen in the FR versions at this juncture, except in Watazumi's version (F:W88), which, once again, exhibits a high degree of divergence from other FR versions.

In all of the beginnings and ends of sections of the piece, the ending of the "*Reibo*" pieces exhibits the least conformity between the two groups. In the SR versions of the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage (S:W62, S:Y68, S:I63) (Figure 34), the final phrase of the piece ends on a sustained a-natural", which is preceded by b-flat". In the Jin (S:J81) and Sakai (S:S80) versions, this entire phrase does not occur. These two versions conclude on the phrase corresponding to the penultimate phrase of the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto versions, which ends on the notes c" - d", with the d" sustained. A virtually identical phrase is notated in the Yokoyama score as the final phrase of the piece, but is not performed.¹²⁹ The pattern of variation seen here clearly reflects transmission between members of the same lineage within each group.

The FR versions do not have the b-flat" - a-natural" phrase that concludes the SR versions. Instead, up to eight phrases later (Figure 35), all versions conclude on a sustained d', preceded by a shorter c' in Uramoto's (F:U51) and Watazumi's (F:W99) versions and the pitch g' in Yokoyama's (F:Y82), Jin's (F:J66), and Sakai's (F:S60) versions. Thus, the final note is d' in five of the ten versions (the five "*Futaiken reibo*" pieces), d" in two versions (S:J and S:S), and in one version the final phrase is d" in the notated score but not in the performance (S:Y). The piece ends on a" in three of the versions (S:W, S:Y, S:I). The variation seen in the endings is not confined to the final note, but is evident in the entire final phrase.

The differences observed in the endings of the piece can be classified in the following manner. The greatest differences can be seen between the two groups of pieces. Within both groups, the differences coincide with the different lines of transmission, with the single exception of Yokoyama's FR version.

¹²⁹ When Yokoyama taught me "*Shōganken reibo*" in 1989, he said that the c" - d" phrase was one way to end the piece, but that he preferred ending on the a-natural".

The data in the transcriptions at the locations of the beginnings and endings of formal divisions not only manifests to a great extent a commonality between all ten performances, but also reflects lines of transmission defined by both the two groups of pieces and the lineages within each group. The greatest degree of similarity is found in comparisons of the FR Jin and Sakai pieces, the SR Jin and Sakai pieces, the FR Uramoto, Watazumi, and Yokoyama pieces, and the SR Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto pieces.

In addition to the material at the formal divisions, another feature which distinguishes the two groups of pieces is the distinctive melodic formulae 'd-c' (hereafter referred to as cadential formula 1) and 'd-c-g' (hereafter referred to as cadential formula 2) (see Figure 36). These two melodic formulae are particularly significant because they are often cadential phrases and are found in a number of locations throughout all ten transcriptions. Cadential formula 1 is found only in the FR versions, while cadential formula 2 occurs most often in the SR versions. The absence or presence of a final g' differentiates the two formulae, and hence the two groups of pieces. The following discussion compares the two groups of the "*Reibo*" piece, focusing upon these distinctive melodic formulae.

Figure 36 shows the first example where melodic formula 1 or melodic formula 2 is found in all ten versions (F:U14, etc.). This phrase concludes with a sustained d", followed by either formula 1 or 2. In all versions the phrase after the melodic formula culminates in a sustained g", the first occurrence of this core note in the upper octave. Thus an important cadential point occurs here.

Looking first at the FR group, variations of cadential formula 1 are found in all five FR versions. In the SR group, variations of cadential formula 2 are found in all five SR versions. As stated above, the main difference between these formulae is the presence of the g' in all of the SR versions and the absence of the g' in all of the FR versions.

Figure 37 (S:W21, etc.) gives the second and third occurrence in the SR versions of the cadential pattern (formula 2). There are no corresponding cadential formulae in any of the FR versions. This pattern, which is found with minor variations in all five of the SR group, is preceded by a phrase dominated by a sustained d" and marks the end of an example of a distinctive melodic pattern called *reibo no te* (see above, p.[367](#)).

Cadential melodic formula 2 occurs again in the SR versions during the final phrase of the *honte* section (S:W23, etc.) (see Figure 38). This section concludes with a sustained d", followed in all of the SR pieces by cadential formula 2, except S:W. The Watazumi version ends with a single sustained d", another of many examples of variation between Watazumi and the other performers within the group. As was the case in the previous example, there are no corresponding cadential formulae in any of the FR versions, though there is a sustained g" marking the corresponding point in the five versions of the FR group. As explained in the discussion of large scale structure, there is no formal division labelled in the traditional FR scores at this point, but an important cadential point does occur.

The fifth and sixth occurrences of cadential formula 2 in the SR group are shown in Figure 39, marking the end of the *takane* section. The formula occurs only once in Jin's SR version (S:J44). In contrast, in the FR versions, cadential formula 1 is found in the location corresponding to the fifth occurrence in the SR pieces of formula 2. No cadential formulae is found in the FR pieces in the location corresponding to the six occurrence of SR formula 2.

The section marked *takane* in the SR group (S:W36, etc.) (see Figure 40), once again concludes with cadential formula 2. In this case, the pattern in the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto SR versions omits the c", being only d" - g', while the Jin-Sakai SR versions retain the c". In the FR pieces, this point is the final phrase of the *honte* section and ends with one or more sustained d"s. A variation of cadential formula 1 occurs only in Jin's FR version. The phrasing at this point corresponds to a pattern of variation frequently observed, with these notes making a separate phrase in the Watazumi-Yokoyama versions (F:W49, F:Y48). In contrast, they conclude a longer phrase in the Jin-Sakai versions (F:J29, F:S29), as well as the Uramoto version (F:U24).

The final phrase of the *takane* section in all of the FR versions and the final phrase of the *takane gaeshi* section in all of the SR versions (Figure 41) resolves on a sustained d". In all of the pieces in the SR group, this note is followed by cadential formula 2. These notes form a separate phrase in the Jin-Sakai SR versions (S:J62, S:S62). In all of the FR versions, the d" is followed by a variation of cadential formula 1.

As explained in the discussion of large scale structure, there is no formal division labelled in the traditional SR scores at this point, but an unmarked minor division does occur. The final phrase of all of the FR *hachigaeshi* sections also concludes with cadential formula 1, (see Figure 42). Uramoto's version differs from the other versions by omitting the c" (F:U38). In all of the SR versions at the corresponding point, the phrase ends on a d", followed in every version except Watazumi's with a short c". Watazumi again is the exception, omitting the c" (S:W58).

The phrase preceding the SR *musubi* section, that is, the final phrase of the SR *hachigaeshi* section (see Figure 43), conforms with the previous examples by ending with a sustained d" followed by variations of formula 2. As seen earlier, these notes form a separate phrase in the Jin-Sakai SR versions, and conclude a larger phrase in the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto SR versions. The cadential formula does not occur in the FR versions at this point.

In the above instances, the consistency and variation of melodic formulae almost always corresponds to the two groups of pieces and the different lineages within the two groups. Figure 44 illustrates this correspondence. It is possible to conclude that the final g' of cadential formula 2 is a defining feature of the "*Shôganken reibo*" group. There are no instances of the g", which differentiates formula 2 from formula 1, occurring in the cadential patterns of any of the "*Futaiken reibo*" pieces.

Besides the differences that are found at the formal divisions and between the form and number of occurrences of the cadential formula, other material differentiates the two groups of pieces. There are a number of instances of material of one or more phrases that is present in all five versions of one group that is not found in any version

of the other group. There are also a number of instances of a series of phrases present in most or all of the versions of one group which are not found at all in the versions of the other group.

The first major example of this is found in the *honte* section at the location corresponding to S:W21 (Figure 45). Three phrases that occur in all five of the SR versions are completely absent in all five of the FR versions. Secondly, in what corresponds to F:W57 in the *takane* section of the FR versions (corresponding to the *takane gaeshi* section of the SR versions), a phrase of *reibo no te* material (see p.367) that occurs in all of the FR versions (except that of Uramoto), does not occur in any of the SR versions (Figure 46). The opposite phenomenon occurs a few phrases later, with another *reibo no te* occurring in the SR versions (Figure 47) but not found in any of the FR versions.

It is the *hachigaeshi* section, however, which contains the longest occurrences of material found in the versions of one group but not in those of the other. At the point corresponding to F:U36 (Figure 48), between two and six phrases of material is found in all five of the FR versions and in none of the SR versions. In the same relative location (S:W54, etc.) (Figure 49), up to four phrases present in all five of the SR versions are not found in the FR versions. Several phrases later (S:W58, etc.) (Figure 50), a *reibo no te* occurs in all of the SR versions but does not appear in any of the FR versions.

There are also a few occurrences of the above phenomenon in the *musubi* section. A phrase in the SR versions at what corresponds to S:W59, which is part of the *hachigaeshi* section in the SR versions but still a part of the *musubi* section in the FR versions (Figure 51), has no counterpart in the FR versions. At the same relative location, beginning at F:W79 (Figure 52), there are up to five phrases of material in the FR versions that does not occur in any of the SR versions. Finally the final phrase in SR versions of Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto (S:W62, etc.) (Figure 53) does not occur in the FR versions, and up to eight phrases at the very end of the FR versions have no counterpart in the SR versions (Figure 54).

These instances of material shared by all of the versions of one group and none of the other group, like the note g' in the cadential formula discussed above, can be used to define the two groups.

Despite the similarity exhibited by all ten pieces on many levels, there is a high degree of variation between the two groups. Variation between different lineages and even between pieces of the same group and the same lineage was also observed in the above discussion. The existence of the innumerable variations between all performances of “*Reibo*” is a characteristic of *honkyoku* frequently ignored and even suppressed in the more rigid lines of transmission and in some of the literature. (see pp.288-295) In the remaining analyses, numerous patterns of variation between all of the ten performances will be seen repeatedly. Many of these variations may illustrate the incorporation of the concept of *honnin no kyoku* (see pp.229,255,267) in *honkyoku* performance.

The previous sections compared the first and broadest classification of transmission, the two groups of pieces, first by looking at the similarities and then the differences of

the FR and SR pieces. The following section looks at the second classification of transmission, that of lineage.

6.4.3 Comparisons within a Single Lineage within One Group

Not surprisingly, the performances of “*Reibo*” whose transcriptions exhibit the least difference and the most similarity between each other are those within a single lineage in a single group. Nevertheless, varying degrees and kinds of differences can be found within these lineages. Many of the similarities and differences between transcriptions of performances of the same lineage and group have been seen in earlier comparisons. The following discussion further explores the relationship between the versions of Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama FR lineage, the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto SR lineage, and the Jin-Sakai FR and SR lineages.

The discussion of performers within a single lineage will first examine the transmission within the Jin-Sakai FR and SR lineages, followed by an examination of the Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama FR and the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto SR lineages. As explained previously (p.349), although Uramoto and Watazumi belong to the same lineage and group according to the genealogy chart, their relationship is an exception; the transmission between Uramoto is not acknowledged by Watazumi. In contrast, the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto transmission is similar to the Jin-Sakai transmission in that it is clearly acknowledged. In the final part of this section a detailed look is taken at the straightforward, clearly acknowledged Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage. The more ambiguous Uramoto-Watazumi transmission will be dealt with separately (p.404-418).

6.4.3.1. Jin-Sakai Lineage

The greatest similarity between performances can be seen in the Jin-Sakai lineage of both the FR and the SR versions. This is the case in spite of the fact that the two *shakuhachi* players do not represent a direct transmission. Instead, Sakai is one generation removed from Jin, with Jin’s student, Moriyasu, the intermediary between them (see genealogy [Chart 7, p.351](#)). Although not direct, the transmission is openly acknowledged by all parties concerned. Sakai in particular made it clear that the transmission of the “*Reibo*” pieces should be traced back to Jin (and beyond). It is therefore not surprising to observe more similarities than differences between both the FR and the SR versions of Jin and Sakai, although variation between the performances of the two does occur. In general, Sakai’s versions of both groups of pieces adhere closely to those of his predecessor Jin. A similar degree of similarity can be observed between Watazumi and Iwamoto, also performers of the same lineage but one generation removed on the genealogy chart (see below, pp.389-397).

The similarity between the performances of Jin and Sakai is especially apparent in the melodic line and in the phrasing. The total number of phrases in Jin’s SR version is eighty-one, compared to eighty phrases in Sakai’s SR version. There is more discrepancy between the FR versions of the two players, where a total of sixty-six phrases in Jin’s FR version contrast with only sixty phrases in Sakai’s FR version. The difference between the number of phrases in Jin and Sakai’s FR versions is still,

however, significantly less than the difference between any two of the three members of the other FR lineage: the total number of phrases in Uramoto's FR version is fifty-seven, compared to ninety-nine phrases in Watazumi's FR version and eighty-two phrases in Yokoyama's FR version.

The differences between the versions of Jin and Sakai occur primarily where Sakai's version becomes more complex or elaborate than that of his predecessor. For example, the initial phrase of Sakai's FR version is much more developed than Jin's initial FR phrase (Figure 55). The same pattern can be seen in the third phrase of Jin's and Sakai's SR versions (Figure 56), in the fifth phrase of Jin's and Sakai's SR versions (Figure 57), in the ninth phrase of Jin's and Sakai's FR versions (Figure 58), and again in the twenty-third phrase of Jin's SR version (phrase twenty-five in Sakai's SR version) (Figure 59). In one instance, Sakai performs an entire phrase which has no counterpart in Jin's version (S:S45) (Figure 60). In contrast, there are very few, if any instances of either Jin's FR or SR versions being significantly more elaborate than Sakai's FR and SR versions.

The same tendency towards elaboration in Sakai's performance compared with Jin's performance is reflected in all aspects, including minute details. Because the similarities and differences between the Jin and the Sakai performances are so clear in the comparison of their large scale features, these details will not be discussed here.

Sakai Chikuho's elaboration of Jin's performance may be part of the elements of playing that he used to give his *honkyoku* a flavour unique to Chikuho *ryû* and that his successor, Sakai Shôdô, later so emphatically repudiated (see p.241). Yet, other than the type of elaboration seen in the above examples, there is very little deviation between the transcriptions of the Jin and the Sakai versions of the "*Futaiken reibo*" and "*Shôganken reibo*" pieces. This may be indicative of the more *ryû* oriented context in which Sakai operated, in contrast to the recusant nature of Watazumi's transmission, the second lineage of this analysis.

6.4.3.2 Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto Lineage

The second lineage represented in the ten transcriptions is that of Uramoto, Watazumi, Yokoyama and Iwamoto. Though the transmission between Uramoto and Watazumi is not acknowledged by Watazumi, there is some evidence that supports the genealogy chart, which traces a line of transmission through them. Examples of this evidence, which are presented below, incorporate Uramoto's performance in the examination of the entire lineage, and compare the performances within the lineage with those of the Jin-Sakai lineage.

There are many examples of similarities shared by the Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage that are not present in the Jin-Sakai lineage. These examples demonstrate a simple correlation between persons within one lineage in a single group, indicating a direct transmission. For example, in the phrase which corresponds to F:U8 (Figure 61), Uramoto plays a series of notes (a-flat'-g', etc.) that are also played by Watazumi and Yokoyama, but which are omitted completely by Jin and Sakai.

Although essentially the same material, there is slight variation between Uramoto and Watazumi with regard to phrasing and the complexity of notes within the phrase. For example, the beginning of Uramoto's phrase eight begins a note earlier than the beginning of the same phrase in Watazumi's transcription. Also, Watazumi takes a breath at F:W13 and F:W14, while Uramoto does not. These differences fit the general pattern of variation between the two players, with Watazumi performing more phrases (a total of ninety-nine) than Uramoto (a total of fifty-seven) throughout the piece.

Uramoto and Watazumi exhibit slight differences between the short notes in what corresponds to Watazumi's phrase fourteen. Even more variation occurs in the version of Yokoyama, who performs a number of short a-flat' and g' notes (F:Y13) rather than the single sustained a-flat' found in both Uramoto and Watazumi's versions.

A clear pattern of transmission between three generations of the same lineage can be seen. There occurs some variation in the complexity of the phrases from Uramoto to Watazumi, with more complexity occurring from Watazumi to Yokoyama. This tendency towards elaboration is similar to that which was seen in the Jin-Sakai lineage.

The similarity which exists between the Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto performances is thrown into strong relief when compared with the Jin-Sakai performances; representing a different lineage or line of transmission. For example, at the point corresponding to the sustained a-flat' and g' in Uramoto's phrase eight and Watazumi's phrase thirteen, Jin and Sakai do not play anything. Instead there is no correspondence until the end of F:U8, etc. Turning to the SR groups, one finds a similar pattern of variation differentiating the Watazumi lineage from the Jin lineage. For example, at a nearby point in the SR versions, (see Figure 61), there is no material in the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto SR performances (at the end of S:W7, etc.) corresponding to phrase 13 in the Jin-Sakai SR performances. These and other examples found in the transcriptions support the genealogy chart in classifying within a single lineage the performances of Uramoto, Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto.

6.4.3.3 Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto Lineage

The lineage chart and the examples presented above notwithstanding, Watazumi refuses to acknowledge Uramoto as his teacher of "*Reibo*". In contrast to the unacknowledged transmission between Uramoto and Watazumi, the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage corresponds to the Jin-Sakai lineage in the straightforward, acknowledged nature of the transmission it represents. The Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage will be further scrutinized by looking at just its Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto component. The unique Uramoto-Watazumi transmission will be discussed separately (pp.[404-418](#)).

The pattern of similarities and differences corresponding to the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage is especially noticable in the details of performance, an area of analysis as yet untouched. In order to compare the details of performance

between performers and lineages, the method of analyzing them must be introduced and explained.

While analyses of written transcriptions using the methods outlined above can shed light on certain questions relating to transmission by showing large scale structures, melodic contour, and distinctive melodic formulae, they do not address the elements which, from the point of view of the performer, most distinguish one performer, generation, or lineage from another. These elements are the details of performance; these include embellishments and other minute performance techniques. The existing written and oral analyses of *honkyoku* by members of the tradition, described above (pp.331-342), confirm that it is these elements that most concern the performers themselves. In terms of the *shakuhachi* tradition, this level of analysis is central to an understanding of *honkyoku* as a process rather than a product.

The method of analyzing the details of performance that is used below is based upon the traditional methods of discussing *honkyoku*. With this method, the transcriptions into staff notation function as points of reference rather than a source of analytical data. Such a detailed commentary on a particular technique, note, or segment of a phrase, is based on the language used in teaching, and in tradition-based discussions of the *honkyoku* tradition.

Because of the nature of the analysis, it is necessary to confine the discussion to a small portion of the pieces. A detailed analysis of all ten transcriptions based upon tradition-based methods is not practical due to the large amount of manipulation of data and analytical discussion it would entail. The only option was to choose a limited amount of material from the transcriptions, basing the choice as much as possible on my own knowledge and understanding of the “*Reibo*” piece as a performer of the piece and recipient of the tradition represented by the two groups of pieces and the two lineages within each group.

Consequently attention is focused on a single melodic formula only. Although representing only a fraction of the piece, I believe that the sample is large enough to draw a number of conclusions regarding elements that are and are not transmitted from one generation of performers to another in the *honkyoku* tradition. Although the detailed analysis is limited to one melodic formula, corresponding examples, observations, and cross-references will be drawn from the entire piece.

I have chosen to use as the basis of this analysis, elements of the *reibo no te* pattern (see p.367), a melodic figure which is found throughout the piece. In particular, I will focus on *reibo no te* found in the *honte* section (Figure 62). My reasons behind this particular choice for analysis are as follows:

1. *Reibo no te* is the most important melodic pattern in the “*Reibo*” piece. It is given a specific name within the tradition, and is often discussed in the process of transmission, for example during lessons.
2. *Reibo no te* contain minute embellishments and performance techniques, including pitch and timbre variations generated by the *meri* and *kari* techniques. These details and performance techniques too are frequently discussed in tradition-based analyses, and in the context of teaching.

3. This particular *reibo no te* pattern is present in all ten of the transcriptions, thus allowing observations to be made across the whole sample of recordings.

As stated previously, (p.367), *reibo no te* is a pattern of notes which may be less than a phrase, an entire phrase or more than one phrase. It is always in the upper octave range (甲, *kan*), and is predominately performed with the *meri* technique. It is usually characterized by a density of notes far greater than found in the rest of the piece.

The pattern of notes centres primarily around the pitch g" and to a lesser degree a-flat", and frequently concludes with the pitches e-flat" and d". The note g" is the primary note in all instances of *reibo no te* in nearly every version of the piece. There are, in the context of *reibo no te*, three methods used to produce the pitch g" (see Table 5). These methods are distinct from each other and, for the most part, are not interchanged in the context of *reibo no te*. Which method should be used in a particular instance is an important aspect of what is taught and learned in the course of transmitting the piece "*Reibo*".

The first and most common method of playing the note, which I will call "method A", entails covering (counting from the bottom finger hole) the second, fourth, and fifth (back) finger holes and using the *meri* technique.¹³⁰ The second method, which I will call "method B", is the same as the first except that the second finger hole is left open. This raises the pitch, so the application of far more of the *meri* technique than is employed in the first method is required to lower the sound to the proper pitch. The third method of producing g", which I will call "method C", is by using the standard fingering (finger holes one and two open, with finger holes three, four and five closed) and the *kari* technique. Method C is not used in the main body of *reibo no te*. Instead, it is frequently used to produce the g" immediately after *reibo no te*, providing a sense of resolution to the *reibo no te* phrase.

Similar usage of the above-mentioned three methods of playing the note g" in *reibo no te* are most apparent in versions by performers of the same lineage. These similarities manifest themselves over the same lineage regardless of group, FR or SR. In the Jin-Sakai performances of both the FR and the SR groups, only method A is used in the main body of *reibo no te*. In contrast, in the Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto versions of both the FR and SR groups, both methods A and B are used. Method B is utilized most often to produce the initial g" in the *reibo no te* in the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto performances. Data from the level of detail described above and conclusions based thereon will be incorporated in the remainder of the analysis where appropriate.

Turning now to more large-scale features of the performances, transcription-based analysis at times show that Iwamoto (third generation) adopts and further adds to variation that Yokoyama (second generation) has added to the version played by Watazumi (first generation). This pattern is also frequently the case in the "*Futaiken reibo*" Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama lineage. But, as well as tending towards elaboration as seen in the Jin-Sakai lineage and the FR Uramoto lineage, the variation can also be one of simplifying. An example of this type of pattern of transmission can

¹³⁰ See p.265 for a definition of the *meri* technique, and its opposite, the *kari* technique.

be seen at S:W15 (Figure 63). Yokoyama abbreviates a series of e-flat"-d"s found in Watazumi's transcription. Iwamoto adopts Yokoyama's abbreviated variation and abbreviates further by omitting the f" that follows the e-flat"-d" pattern in both Watazumi and Yokoyama's versions.

Another, quite different pattern can be seen in the transmission of "*Shôganken reibo*" between Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto which may, in fact, best typify these three versions. This pattern is one whereby variations added by Yokoyama to Watazumi's versions are not adopted by Iwamoto. In other words, in many cases Iwamoto's version is more similar to Watazumi, his teacher's teacher, than it is to Yokoyama, his teacher.

This can be seen from the beginning of the transcriptions (Figure 64). Here Yokoyama plays in three phrases what Watazumi plays in two. Yokoyama's additional breath, which occurs after the initial sustained d', is not adopted by Iwamoto. Although Iwamoto's version incorporates the additional sustained d' found in Yokoyama's version at the end of phrase two but not in Watazumi's version, it again does not follow Yokoyama's version in the next phrase (S:Y3). A single sustained e-flat' in Watazumi's version is performed as an elaborate pattern of e-flat' and d' notes in Yokoyama's version. In Iwamoto's version, the sustained e-flat' appears again, followed by only two notes, e-flat'-d', to suggest the elaborate pattern of Yokoyama's version.

The variations seen here could be explained in the following manner. Yokoyama appears to have added the extra d's to the end of Watazumi's first phrase, which he then transmitted to Iwamoto. The extra d' also appears in Yokoyama's FR version, indicating a possible cross-over from one group to the other. Yokoyama may have added the extra phrase after transmitting Watazumi's version, without the extra phrase, to Iwamoto. In taking the extra breath, Yokoyama might have been reflecting the performance practices of the FR version, in which he, and all of the four other players, take the extra breath. Equally possible is his being influenced by the performances of the SR version by Jin and Sakai, which has the extra phrase. This same scenario may explain the g' played by Yokoyama before the e-flat' in his phrase three. There are no notes before the e-flat' in either the SR or the FR Watazumi performances.

There are numerous other examples in the transcriptions of what seems to be a borrowing or cross-over from the FR to the SR, or the SR to the FR pieces. The borrowed material may be from the performer's own version of the piece in the other group, or from another performer's version in the other group. A possible reason as to why Yokoyama's elaborate pattern of e-flat'-d's was not transmitted to Iwamoto will be given below.

Another example of this pattern of transmission between Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto is in phrase S:W11 (Figure 65). Yokoyama's version varies from Watazumi's version at the end of this phrase with the addition of a sustained c" followed by the two notes c"-g' of short duration. These three notes are not, however, incorporated into Iwamoto's version.

A final example of this pattern of transmission is located in S:W25 (Figure 66). First of all, the breath that marks the beginning of this phrase in Watazumi's version is not present in Yokoyama's version. This variation in phrasing is not adopted in Iwamoto's version, which follows that of Watazumi. Secondly, the pattern in which sustained and short e-flat's and d's are found in Watazumi's S:W25 is varied in the corresponding phrase of Yokoyama's version. This variation is not adopted by Iwamoto, which follows the original pattern found in Watazumi's version.

Finally, the phrasing in Watazumi's SR version is followed more closely by Iwamoto than by Yokoyama, as evidenced by the total number of phrases. Watazumi's SR version has a total of sixty-two phrases, compared to sixty-eight phrases in Yokoyama's version and sixty-three phrases in Iwamoto's version.

Because of these and other similar examples of this pattern of transmission found in the transcriptions, one might, if one did not have access to genealogical data, assume that rather than Yokoyama being Iwamoto's teacher, the line of transmission was Watazumi-Iwamoto-Yokoyama. The anomaly in the relationship between variation and transmission can be explained by an element of change and stability in the *honkyoku* tradition as yet not touched upon in the above analyses, namely that of date of transmission and date of recording.

Though it is not known when Yokoyama learned "*Shôganken reibo*" from Watazumi, we do know that Yokoyama taught Iwamoto the piece before the late 1970s, when Iwamoto went to England, where he has lived since. The recording used as the basis of Watazumi's transcription was made in 1971. Iwamoto's recording was made four years later, in 1975. That is, Iwamoto's version reflects fairly consistently the version that Watazumi was playing just before Iwamoto left Japan for England. Yokoyama's version on the other hand was not recorded until 1985.

Taking this chronology of the recordings into consideration, the following seems possible. Yokoyama learned the piece from Watazumi, and then taught the piece with only minor variation to Iwamoto. Iwamoto then performed the piece for recording in a way that reflected the similarity between Yokoyama's and Watazumi's performance at that time. By 1985, however, when the recording of Yokoyama's performance was made, Yokoyama's way of playing the piece had evolved to become more different from Watazumi's recorded performance than Iwamoto's recorded performance.

It is possible that by the date of Yokoyama's recorded performance, Iwamoto's performance would still have closely resembled that of Watazumi. Iwamoto, in England being relatively isolated from his teacher and the rest of the *shakuhachi* tradition in Japan for over a decade, might exhibit in his performance of *honkyoku* the conservatism seen in the language patterns and the performance of traditional music by groups of peoples and their successive generations who have migrated away from their native country.¹³¹

¹³¹ As one example, Ryan (1989:327) describes many of the performances of traditional music by Brazilian migrants in Sydney as "marked by rhythmic simplification and standardization".

Yokoyama's (1985:116-120) account of his experience of being taught the *honkyoku* entitled "San'an" (産安, 'Safe Delivery') by Watazumi further illustrates the relationship between the passage of time and the transmission of *honkyoku*. Before he became Watazumi's student, Yokoyama had in his possession a recording of the piece "San'an" as performed by Watazumi. Because it was one of Yokoyama's favourite *honkyoku*, he was naturally pleased when Watazumi finally decided to teach the piece to him. But when Watazumi began to teach "San'an" to Yokoyama, it had changed. In Yokoyama's ears, Watazumi was not teaching him the "San'an" that Yokoyama had grown fond of by listening to the recording. Consequently Yokoyama resisted learning the piece as Watazumi was teaching it. Because Watazumi would not accommodate Yokoyama's desire to be taught "San'an" as performed on his recording, it took Yokoyama three years to learn the piece.

It might be possible to address the element of passage of time in relation to the transmission of *honkyoku* with a comparison of transcriptions of a set of recordings of, for example, three generations of performers made over a span of time. A comparison of the similarities and differences between transcriptions of several performances by the same person over many years, and between transcriptions of performances representing different generations might show patterns of variability that could be attributed to the effects of the passage of time, as well as other variations that could be attributed to the transmission process from generation to generation. In the case of this present thesis, however, with the ten transcriptions described above as its subjects for analysis, little more can be said than has been conjectured above.

6.4.4 Comparison between the Transcriptions of Uramoto and Jin

The previous section focused upon the most direct lines of transmission, firstly by looking at the Jin-Sakai lineage. Secondly, the Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage was examined. Finally, the component of this second lineage which is openly acknowledged by both teacher and student, that is, that of Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto, was further discussed. Relatively simple and direct correlations between performances and lineage were observed, especially in the Jin-Sakai versions. Variations between performers within the same lineage and group could be found, however, especially in cases involving Watazumi, and to a lesser degree Uramoto.

The unique relationship between Uramoto and Jin has yet to be studied. According to the genealogy chart, they both learned "*Futaiken reibo*" from the same teacher, Konashi Kinsui. They are therefore of the same generation and, in terms of their teacher, the same lineage. For this reason, a comparison of their performances adds another dimension to the discussion of transmission of the "*Reibo*" piece.

Although there appear to be no recordings of Konashi Kinsui, a comparison of Uramoto's and Jin's "*Futaiken reibo*" versions could indicate characteristics of the transmission that occurred between their common teacher and themselves. Comparing Uramoto's and Jin's versions may show ways in which pieces change and remain constant during transmission from a single teacher to different students. Among the

ten transcriptions used in this study, this kind of relationship is found only with Uramoto's and Jin's FR versions.

Reference must also be made to the variable date of transmission. As was seen in the example concerning the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage, the dates of transmission between teacher and student, as well as the dates of the recordings from which the transcriptions are made, may have a significant bearing upon the patterns of similarities and differences between performances. It is not known when either Uramoto or Jin learned their FR versions from Konashi. Though the dates of the recordings are 1985 for Uramoto and 1980 for Jin, both of these dates represent when the recordings were released, not the much earlier dates of the performances. Therefore, in the following comparison, it is not possible to take into account any similarity or difference which may have arisen from differences in the times of transmission from Konashi and the times of recording the two performances.

The performances of "*Futaiken reibo*" by both Uramoto and Jin begin in a similar fashion. By the third phrase (Figure 67), however, the two begin to vary. In Uramoto's version, the third phrase begins with a sustained e-flat', a note that does not occur in Jin's version. The third phrase of Jin begins on the note g', which is followed by the note d'. Both of these notes are core notes and are sustained for over four seconds. There is neither the beginning of a phrase nor the note g' at this point in Uramoto's version, though a note d' does appear, which might correspond with the sustained d' in Jin's version. Uramoto, however sustains the d' for less than two seconds. In other words, there is musical material present in both Uramoto's and Jin's FR versions which is not present in the other's version.

Once again transmission lines seen in the genealogy chart are reflected in the comparisons, in that Watazumi's and Yokoyama's versions basically follow that of Uramoto, with the note e-flat' beginning their third phrase. Likewise, Sakai's version follows that of Jin, his predecessor on the genealogy chart, by not playing the note e-flat'.

In this case, Sakai's version once again parallels that of Jin, his predecessor, almost note for note, by omitting the e-flat' of Uramoto's version in phrase three, and instead performing a sustained d', followed by a sustained d' in a single phrase. The closeness seen here between Jin and Sakai's versions has been observed previously.

In contrast to the similarity between Jin's performance and that of Sakai, material that is performed by Jin but not Uramoto, as well as material played by Uramoto but not Jin can be found in Watazumi's performance. Comparison of the performances of "*Futaiken reibo*" by Uramoto, Jin, and Watazumi, accentuates patterns of divergence in the performances. These divergences, anticipated by orality theories, are not compatible with literate-based concepts such as "original" or "authentic" versions or performances.

The corresponding point in the SR versions further substantiate this conclusion. The e-flat', which occurs in the third phrase of Uramoto's FR version but not in Jin's FR version, occurs in all of the SR versions, including that of Jin. The g' which occurs in the third phrase in Jin's FR version but not in Uramoto's version, occurs in Sakai's SR version. It does not occur in any of the other SR versions, including that of Jin.

The sustained d' which follows the g' in four of the FR versions, and the shorter d' at the corresponding point in Uramoto's FR version, is found in phrase four of Jin and Sakai's SR versions. The note does not occur in any of the other SR versions. Again, both the e-flat' not played by Jin and the g' not played by Uramoto, are represented in at least one of the SR versions, and in the case of the e-flat', in all five of the SR versions.

In the previous example, the FR versions of Uramoto and Jin did not agree with each other, while Watazumi's FR version contained all of the core notes found in both Uramoto's and Jin's versions and Sakai's version agreed with that of Jin's. An example of similarities occurring between Uramoto and Jin, which are also played by both Watazumi and Sakai, can be found in the initial few phrases of the *takane* section in the "*Futaiken reibo*" group (F:U25, etc.) (Figure 68), implying a simple transmission from Konashi to both Uramoto and Jin and on to Watazumi and Yokoyama and to Sakai. In both Uramoto's and Jin's FR versions, there is an initial phrase centering around a sustained g". This material occurs in the other three FR versions, though in a more elaborate form. In the FR versions of Uramoto and Jin, this initial phrase is followed by a phrase beginning with the distinctive notes d'" and e-flat'", the highest pitches in the piece. These notes also occur in the other three FR versions.

An example of similarities occurring between Uramoto and Jin, which are played by neither Watazumi nor by Sakai, can be found in the same initial few phrases of the *takane* section in the "*Futaiken reibo*" group (F:U25, etc.) (Figure 68). Deviating from the Uramoto and Jin FR versions, the other three FR versions (Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Sakai) all share what appears to be additional material between the initial phrase and what is the second phrase of the *takane* section in the Uramoto and Jin versions. This additional material also creates a difference in phrasing between the Uramoto and Jin versions and the other three versions. It must be pointed out that the additional material found in the versions of Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Sakai, but not in the versions of Uramoto and Jin, corresponds to the notes that are the beginning of the first phrase of this section in all of the SR pieces (including Jin's SR version), that is the note b-flat", followed by a long c"". After the long c"", all ten versions coincide with phrases that play between d'" and e-flat'", resolving on c"". The multiple patterns of transmission seen here can best be described in terms of the cross-over and variation which occurs among performers within an oral tradition, in which the most "authentic" performance is the one most recently performed.

In the example above, the performances representing the first generation among the ten transcriptions agree with each other in the FR group in both material and phrasing at an important juncture in the piece, the beginning of a formal division. The three transcriptions representing the subsequent generations in the FR group, that of Watazumi, Yokoyama and Sakai, all have material not found in the transcriptions of the previous generation. The "added" material is, however, shared by not only the two different lineages in the FR group, those of Watazumi-Yokoyama and of Sakai, but also by all of the SR versions, including Jin. In this case, new material was neither created nor added to the FR piece, by either Watazumi or Sakai, because variations of the material are found in all of the SR versions. The cross-over between both different lineages (Watazumi-Yokoyama and Sakai) and the different groups of pieces (FR and SR) is again evident here.

There is only one instance where a long and complex passage is found only in Uramoto's FR version. Located in the *musubi* section (F:U42-44) (Figure 69), the material is performed over three phrases. Only the initial note, c^{'''}, is found in Watazumi's FR version (F:W83). The rest of the passage, which contains a number of core notes as well as a *reibo no te*, is not found in any of the other nine transcriptions. This is the only instance in the entire "*Reibo*" piece where a substantial amount of musical material occurs in only one of the ten versions. Watazumi is thus not the only performer to exhibit characteristics unique to his performance.

There are in fact, relatively few major musical events, such as phrases, melodic segments, beginnings of phrases and even solitary core notes, which occur only in one performance. This characteristic implies a cohesiveness or unity within the "*Reibo*" tradition that transcends lineage or grouping.

The transcriptions of Uramoto and Jin, who are of the same "generation" on the genealogy chart and were both taught by Konashi, exhibit the non-uniform and relatively high degree of variation that is found in comparisons between transcriptions of other performers who do not have the same close relationship in terms of teacher. There is less agreement between the Uramoto and Jin transcriptions than is found in the more stable, acknowledged teacher-student transmission of both the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage and the Jin-Sakai lineage. As stated earlier, it is not known how much the disparity observed between Uramoto's and Jin's performances, (or between any of the performances) is due to differences in the dates of transmission and recordings. The influence and effect that the numerous teachers both performers appear to have had may be another factor in the variation between their performances (see p.160). Finally, in the comparison between Jin and Uramoto's performances, a number of instances of cross-over between the two groups of pieces and the two lineages can be observed. For example, there is material that occurs in all of the SR performance which also occurs in the FR versions of Watazumi and Yokoyama, yet is not present in the FR performances of Uramoto and Jin.

6.4.5 Analysis of the Uramoto-Watazumi Transmission

Of all of the lines of transmission on the level of individual performers of the same lineage, including that of Uramoto and Jin (see above), the greatest degree of disparity is found between Uramoto and Watazumi's FR performances. A comparison of their performances testifies to the recusant nature of Watazumi's ideology, discussed above (p.303-304). An extreme example of this disparity can be seen in the initial phrase of the *musubi* section (F:U39, etc.) (Figure 70). Uramoto's version is not only more similar to that of Yokoyama than it is to that of Watazumi, but is also more similar to Jin's and Sakai's versions, which completely omit the material in the other versions.

The relationship between Uramoto and Watazumi is a special one, deserving particular attention in the present examination of the processes of transmission operating in all ten transcriptions. Because the transmission that is said to have occurred between Uramoto and Watazumi is not clearly acknowledged, at least by Watazumi, it is more problematic than the distinct, acknowledged transmissions between Jin and Sakai, or between Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto. Thus, a more

focused comparison of Uramoto and Watazumi, looking at both similarities and differences, is presented below.

The pattern of incongruity between the performances of Uramoto and Watazumi can be expected for two reasons. First of all, Watazumi claims that Uramoto did not teach him the piece “*Reibo*”. As discussed earlier (p.303), this is in keeping with Watazumi’s philosophy regarding the nature of *honkyoku*, i.e., the essence of *honkyoku* cannot be taught or learned; Watazumi claims that no one did or was even able to teach him *honkyoku*. Secondly, Watazumi’s reputation for eccentricity in expressing his individualism and his repudiation of hierarchical and frequently constraining systems of transmission, such as the *iemoto* system (see p.288), are consistent with his *honkyoku* performance.

Nevertheless, there are numerous similarities between Watazumi’s performance and that of Uramoto. The single most outstanding agreement between Uramoto’s and Watazumi’s performances of “*Futaiken reibo*” can be seen in the melodic line. The high degree of correspondence between Uramoto’s and Watazumi’s orthographically simplified transcriptions reveals agreement between the two versions at this level. The similarity is particularly evident in the case of core notes that are sustained over two seconds.

Another similarity between Uramoto’s and Watazumi’s performances, but one which cannot be seen in the transcriptions, is the degree of accuracy of the intervals between pitches, or relative pitch.¹³² Both Uramoto and Watazumi perform intervals between notes fairly consistently, especially when compared to Jin, whose relative pitch is quite variable, and Sakai. Not surprisingly, the relative pitches of Watazumi’s student Yokoyama, and Yokoyama’s student Iwamoto are also quite accurate and consistent.

A similar pattern can be seen in a detailed analysis of one instance of *reibo no te* (see p.367). In both methods “A” and “B” of producing the note g” (see p.388), the *meri* technique must be applied to a certain degree in order to produce the desired pitch. If the *meri* technique is not sufficiently applied, both the g” and the a-flat” in *reibo no te* will be sharp relative to the final g” produced by method “C”. The relative pitch of the *meri* notes in this and all *reibo no te* in the versions of the Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage is consistent, relative to the g” produced by method “C”. By contrast, both the FR and SR versions of the Jin-Sakai lineage exhibit a-flat” and g” *meri* notes that are sharp relative to the *kari* note g” of method “C”. The degree of sharpness is generally greater in Jin’s versions than in Sakai’s versions.

Of the two performers Uramoto and Watazumi, however, Watazumi’s relative pitch is more consistent than Uramoto’s pitch, particularly in the case of some *meri* notes. Uramoto performs these notes relatively sharp on occasion, especially during the distinctive *reibo no te* phrase. An example of the differences in pitch control can be heard in the initial phrase of the piece. In Uramoto’s performance, the initial e-flat’ is slightly sharp relative to the following d’. No such pitch variation can be heard in Watazumi’s performance.

¹³² See Chapter 5 (pp.271-282) for a discussion of pitch and interval relationships in the *honkyoku* tradition, and how these are transmitted through lineages and individuals.

This is not to imply that the Uramoto lineage is more “correct” in producing the *merig* than the Jin lineage, or that Watazumi’s pitch is generally “better” than Uramoto’s. As discussed in Chapter 5, the importance placed upon the accuracy of relative pitch varies from performer to performer and from lineage to lineage. In terms of the values of Uramoto and of the Jin-Sakai lineage, the pitch of the notes in question is not incorrect or “out of pitch”. The above observations regarding pitch amongst the ten versions are judgementally neutral, and are made for comparison, just as observations regarding the number or length of notes are made for comparison.

It should also be pointed out that a small part of the variation in pitch heard in the performances of Uramoto and Jin may be attributed to their being of an older generation. Their lives were closer to the historical period in Japan which predated the wide-spread introduction and consequent influence of western music and its standardization of pitch than were those of the generations that followed them. Also, the *shakuhachi* instruments available for much of their lives generally produced less standardized pitches than those instruments which became available to later generations (see p.281).

As stated above, although Uramoto nominally transmitted “*Reibo*” to Watazumi and thus is technically part of the Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama lineage within the “*Futaiken reibo*” group, Watazumi claims that Uramoto exerted minimal influence over his playing. We have already observed a number of examples of differences in performances between Uramoto and Watazumi in the various comparisons made above. An examination of formal divisions shows a number of other differences between the transcriptions of the two performers that, because of their location, are particularly conspicuous. They become even more so when compared to the similarities that occur between other performers within direct teacher-student relationships.

For example, at the formal division between the *shirabe* section and the *honte* section (Figure 71), Watazumi’s performance differs quite noticeably from Uramoto’s performance in both the final phrase of the *shirabe* section and the initial phrase of the *honte* section. There are no major differences at this point between any of the other performers within a single lineage, that is, between Watazumi’s and Yokoyama’s FR version, between either Jin’s and Sakai’s FR or SR versions, and between Watazumi’s, Yokoyama’s and Iwamoto’s SR versions.

Characteristic differences between the performances of Uramoto and Watazumi can also be seen from the initial notes of the transcriptions at the very beginning of the piece (Figure 72). In this first phrase and throughout the piece, Watazumi makes use of more embellishment than Uramoto does. A second major difference is the number of phrases. Uramoto plays his version of “*Futaiken reibo*” in fifty-one phrases, while Watazumi performs the piece in ninety-nine phrases. The total elapsed time of this particular performance of Uramoto’s version is 10 minutes 34 seconds, compared with Watazumi’s 16 minutes 2 seconds. In most cases, Watazumi incorporates the pauses or breaths made by Uramoto, and adds many of his own.

The length of the versions both as expressed in elapsed time and in number of phrases demonstrates a pattern which occurs throughout the piece. Watazumi’s version of “*Futaiken reibo*” is far more complex than Uramoto’s version not only in

embellishment, but also in melodic line and phrasing. Again an example of this can be seen soon after the beginning of the piece. The material between the initial series of the note d' and the first instance of the sustained note a-natural' in Uramoto's version consists of two notes, e-flat' and d' (not including embellishments), performed in a single phrase (F:U3). The corresponding material in Watazumi's version covers five phrases (F:W3-5) and consists of seven notes (also not including embellishments) (see Figure 73).

Besides the elements discussed above, little else can be said about the similarities and differences between the FR versions of Uramoto and Watazumi without reference to the other versions, not only within the same FR group, but also from the other SR group.

The importance of basing all but the most rudimentary conclusions on comparisons of transcriptions of more than any two single performers, such as Uramoto and Watazumi, can be seen in the following examples. There are numerous occasions where the transcriptions of Uramoto and Watazumi do not correspond at all. For example, in the final phrase of the first formal division, *take shirabe* (Figure 74), Uramoto plays two sustained g's. In Watazumi's version, there are no g's, either in the final phrase or the preceding phrase. Instead, his final phrase consists of a series of sustained d' notes alternating with shorter c's.

This clear example of Watazumi's version differing markedly from Uramoto's version is all the more prominent because it corresponds to the end of a formal section. Taking into account only the transcriptions of Uramoto and Watazumi, one could assume with reasonable confidence that the difference was consciously and deliberately effected by Watazumi.

It is incorrect, however, to assume that the many conspicuous and seemingly deliberate discrepancies between the two FR versions discussed above are Watazumi's creations or compositions. In the first example (Figure 74), the final d' found in Watazumi's FR transcription is found in all of the other FR and all of the SR transcriptions. Furthermore, the c' is also found in the SR version of Jin and Sakai. On the other hand, the sustained g's which Uramoto performs occur in both the FR and the SR transcriptions of Jin and Sakai, while they do not occur in the FR and SR transcriptions of Watazumi and Yokoyama, and the SR version of Iwamoto.

In a second example (Figure 75), musical material that is found in Watazumi's FR version, but not in Uramoto's FR version, is performed in an even more elaborate form in all five of the SR versions (S:W8, etc.).

Thus, it cannot be concluded that, in his FR version, Watazumi either made up or deleted the material mentioned above since the SR versions of the Jin-Sakai lineage either have or lack the same material as Watazumi's version. Watazumi might still be credited with (or "accused of") changing the FR version of "*Reibo*"; he may have (perhaps even unconsciously) borrowed additions and omissions from the SR version and inserted them into the FR version transmitted to him by Uramoto. Many such crossovers between the two groups of pieces have been observed elsewhere.

Major examples of the ways in which the performances of Watazumi and Uramoto differ are found by comparing phrases eight through ten of Uramoto's FR version with the latter part of phrase twelve and phrases thirteen through nineteen of Watazumi's FR version (see Figure 76). The difference in phrasing and the higher number of phrases in Watazumi's is consistent with what has been observed before. Other major differences in the transcriptions of Uramoto and Watazumi begin at this point.

The final note of phrase fourteen in Watazumi's version is the core note g', sustained for over four seconds. This prominent note is not found in Uramoto's version. Uramoto also does not perform the material that makes up Watazumi's next phrase (F:W15). Yokoyama's FR version parallels his teacher in both phrasing and material played. The Jin and Sakai FR versions, like that of Uramoto, do not have this material.

Both Uramoto and Watazumi perform the note g' at the point corresponding to the beginning of phrase nine of Uramoto's FR version (Figure 76). This note is not present in any of the other eight versions. Watazumi's agreement with Uramoto, however, is soon over. Watazumi begins a new phrase (F:W17) with the note a'-natural. Uramoto does not begin a new phrase here, nor is there an a'-natural in his melody. Yokoyama follows Watazumi, also beginning a new phrase here with a'-natural. Thus, we can observe an element of variation between Uramoto and Watazumi that is transmitted to the next generation, Yokoyama.

This material does not occur in the FR versions of Jin and Sakai, nor is it heard in the SR versions of Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto. The a'-natural and the beginning of a new phrase is, however, found in the SR versions of Jin and Sakai. Once again, the patterns of similarities and differences suggest a cross-fertilization that overrides the immediate influence of one's teacher, especially in the case of the Uramoto-Watazumi transmission. Such an overriding cross-fertilization is an important feature of transmission within the *honkyoku* tradition.

At the point corresponding to F:U10 (Figure 76), Uramoto plays two g's, which together are sustained for over four seconds. Uramoto's version is the only one in which these notes end the *take shirabe* section. These highly visible core notes are not performed by Watazumi, in either his FR version or his SR version. In Watazumi's FR version, the *take shirabe* section ends with a new phrase centering on three sustained d' notes. In Yokoyama's FR version, there is also a new phrase, with two sustained d' notes. There is a single d' note in Jin and Sakai's FR versions, although they are not in a separate phrase.

The variation at this point between Uramoto and Watazumi, and between the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage and the Jin-Sakai lineage is particularly significant because it occurs at a boundary in the piece. In the light of theories of orality, it is unlikely that the variations at this point occurred unintentionally. Furthermore, the patterns of variation suggests that Watazumi was largely the initiator.

[Table 6](#) summarizes the manner in which the elements of the phrases F:U8-10 in question line up with each other in the ten transcriptions. Besides the differences

between groups, the most noticeable features of the table are the similarities between versions belonging to acknowledged lines of transmission (Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto; Jin-Sakai), and the differences between both the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto line and Uramoto, and the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto line and the Jin-Sakai line. A similar pattern can be observed throughout the entire transcriptions.

Another musical element which reflects the nature of transmission between Uramoto and Watazumi, as well as the other lines of transmission, is *reibo no te* (鈴慕の手, “*Reibo*” pattern’) (see above p.[367](#)).

Figure 77 (corresponding to F:W36-37) shows an instance where Watazumi characteristically performs *reibo no te* quite differently from his nominal teacher Uramoto, especially regarding complexity. There are only ten notes altogether in this Uramoto version of *reibo no te* (F:U16). The sparseness of this instance of Uramoto’s *reibo no te* is reflected most in the FR versions of Jin, and the recipient of Jin’s transmission, Sakai (F:J22. F:S22). Other examples of similarities between Uramoto and Jin, who according to the genealogy chart had the same teacher (Konashi Kinsui), were given above (p.[187](#)).

At the next occurrence in the transcriptions of *reibo no te*, Watazumi’s FR version again bears little resemblance to Uramoto’s FR version. Although in this instance, two *reibo no te* patterns (Figures 78 and 79) can be identified in all three versions of the Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama lineage (in F:U19 and F:U22, in F:W42 and F:W43-44, and in F:Y42 and F:Y43), there are noticeable inconsistencies between Uramoto’s version and Watazumi’s version.

For example, this occurrence of *reibo no te* begins in the middle of a phrase in Uramoto’s version (F:U19), while it corresponds to the beginning of a phrase in Watazumi’s version, (another example of the phrasing differences in the two versions). The only other performance to begin this instance of *reibo no te* in the middle of the phrase is Sakai’s FR (F:S25). Watazumi’s more complex and dense *reibo no te* compared to Uramoto’s also follows previously observed patterns. As observed earlier, in general, Watazumi plays more phrases with more notes and more embellishments than does Uramoto.

Instances in which the Uramoto version differs from versions of the Watazumi-Yokoyama lineage more than from versions of the Jin-Sakai lineage, in spite of Uramoto nominally belonging to the former, are also apparent on the level of performance details. Differences between the Uramoto and Watazumi FR versions (same lineage, same group) are at times not only greater than differences between the Uramoto FR version and the Jin-Sakai FR versions (different lineages, same group), but are also greater than differences between the Uramoto FR version and the Jin-Sakai SR version (different lineages *and* different groups). A partial reason for this might be that Uramoto and Jin, though considered belonging to different lineages in this analysis, both learned from the same teacher, Konashi Kinsui (see p.[187](#)).

Two clear examples of Uramoto’s performance differing from Watazumi’s performance more than from Jin’s performance can be seen in the details of performance. First of all, Uramoto produces all of the g"s in *reibo no te* by method A (see p.[392](#)), covering the second finger hole. This is also the case in Jin and Sakai’s

versions of both the FR and the SR groups. By contrast, in the Watazumi and Yokoyama versions of both the FR and the SR groups, as well as Iwamoto's SR version, some of the g's in *reibo no te* are played with method B, requiring more *meri* technique than method A.

The difference noted here is especially significant. Both Uramoto and Jin, who learned from the same teacher (Konashi), do not use method B, while Watazumi, and the other performers of his lineage, Yokoyama and Iwamoto, do employ method B. The changes in technique involved in going from method A to method B are not likely to have been made unintentionally. Method B is, therefore, almost certainly an addition made by Watazumi.

The second example of differences between the performances of Uramoto and Watazumi being greater than differences between the performances of Uramoto and Jin/Sakai can be seen in the sequence of notes of *reibo no te*. In his *reibo no te* version, Uramoto plays a number of sequences of notes, the basic pattern being a-flat" - g" - e-flat" - g", which is often preceded by the grace notes b-flat" or a-flat". This series of notes, or variations of it, occurs in *reibo no te* of all ten versions of the piece (bracketed in Figure 80). In Uramoto's version, the initial occurrence of this series at the beginning of *reibo no te* is, in effect, two series, which are defined by the two occurrences of the note e-flat" (marked "X" in Figure 81). The e-flat" notes are not present, however, in the initial series of notes in any of the versions that are nominally considered to be the same lineage as Uramoto, that is, the FR versions of Watazumi, Yokoyama, and the SR versions of Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto (Figure 80 "A"). The note, e-flat", is, on the other hand, present in all of the versions that are considered not the same lineage as Uramoto, the FR and SR versions of Jin and Sakai (Figure 80 "B"). In this instance, the data again points clearly to Watazumi as the source of innovation in transmission. In this case the two occurrences of the note e-flat" are part of what was transmitted from Konashi to Uramoto and Jin, but was later omitted by Watazumi.

In Uramoto's version, if a g" follows an a-flat", the next note is always an e-flat". The same rule applies to both the FR and the SR versions of both Jin and Sakai (bracketed in Figure 82). The simple a-flat" - g" - e-flat" series of notes does not occur in the other versions of Uramoto's FR lineage, those of Watazumi and Yokoyama. In contrast, in both Watazumi's and Yokoyama's FR versions, a variety of combinations of a-flat", g", c", and d" notes are performed before the e-flat" note (Figure 83 "A").

The simple a-flat" - g" - e-flat" series of Uramoto's FR version can be found, however, in the SR versions of Watazumi, Yokoyama, and Iwamoto (Figure 83 "B"). But the complex series that were not found in Uramoto's FR version also occur in the SR versions of Watazumi and Yokoyama, though not in Iwamoto's SR version (Figure 83 "C").

This series of notes in Uramoto's version is more similar in its simplicity to Jin and Sakai's versions (of both groups) than it is to the more complex series in Watazumi's and Yokoyama's versions (of both groups). The exception to the above pattern is Iwamoto's SR version, which, is more like Uramoto's, Jin's, and Sakai's versions than like Watazumi's and Yokoyama's versions. This exception cannot be explained

by either lineage or by such elements as the passage of time between transmission and performance.

The ending of phrase F:U22, and the corresponding phrases in the other versions, (Figure 84) further illustrates the complexity of similarities and differences not only between Uramoto and Watazumi, but also between all ten of the transcriptions. Looking first at similarities, a *reibo no te* ends with a sustained a-natural" in the FR versions by Uramoto, Watazumi, and Yokoyama (a similarity within a single lineage in a single group). This also corresponds to the a-natural" in the SR versions of the Watazumi-Yokoyama-Iwamoto lineage (a similarity within a single lineage in two groups). The a-natural" is also the final note in Sakai's version, but it is extremely short in duration (slight similarity between different lineages within the same group). The short notes after the a-natural" in Watazumi's and Yokoyama's FR versions parallel their SR versions (similarities within the same lineage but in different groups). These are some of the ways in which the identity of "*Reibo*" is maintained in various performances.

Turning to the differences between the performances, the a-natural" is the final note of the phrase in F:U22, but is followed by three short notes (b-flat" - a" - g") in F:W and two short notes (g" - g") in F:Y (differences within a lineage within a group). The corresponding note in the F:J version is also the final note and is short in duration, but is an a-flat" instead of a-natural" (differences within a lineage within a group).

One can only conclude from *reibo no te* that while similarities and differences most often correspond to shared lineages and/or groups, this is frequently not the case. The manner in which similarities and differences between *reibo no te* fall sometimes along the lines of the group, sometimes along the lines of lineage with a disregard to group, and sometimes along a combination of the lines of both group and lineage can be observed throughout the transcriptions of the piece and on all levels of analysis.

Throughout the above analyses, one of the most commonly recurring patterns is the frequent involvement of Watazumi when variation between shared lineages or groups do take place. As noted elsewhere, this is to be expected in light of Watazumi's rejection of Uramoto as his teacher of "*Reibo*". Watazumi's assertion that he did not learn "*Reibo*" from Uramoto might best be interpreted, however, less as an assertion of fact and more as a statement concerning the relative freedom one must have to develop one's own version into *honjin no kyoku* or "one's own piece", not bound by tradition (p.229). Watazumi rejects the doctrinaire approach to *honkyoku* performance with the spectacular incongruity between Uramoto's performance and his own. By making it difficult to establish connections between himself and others, both in his performance of "*Reibo*" and in his giving the title "*Furin*" to one version of the piece, Watazumi emphatically affirms his insight into the nature of performance and transmission of classical *shakuhachi honkyoku*.

Yokoyama addressed this issue, and at the same time, provided a partial explanation to the high degree of variation between the ten versions with the following statement:

Playing *honkyoku* is a way of searching for one's own ideals. So when you transmit a *honkyoku*, you are also trying to transmit your ideals. In doing so, it is essential to eventually cut yourself off from your teacher, while at the same

time still respecting your teacher. You must be as strict as that, otherwise the transmission of your own ideals will not occur.

(Yokoyama 1989)

Applicable as this may be to the above analyses and to the *honkyoku* tradition in general, Watazumi goes much further than what Yokoyama suggests in the above quote. Yokoyama's instruction regarding "cutting off yet still respecting one's teacher" is not even an issue with Watazumi. Since Watazumi emphatically insists that he does not have a "teacher", there is neither a teacher to cut off, nor one to respect. Watazumi takes the discussion one magnitude higher by stating that he does not even play *honkyoku*. Instead, he performs *dôkyoku* (道曲, 'pieces of the Way'). Furthermore, his instruments are not *shakuhachi*. Instead he plays *dôgu* (道具, 'tools of the Way'). The authority Watazumi exercises over his performances of *dôkyoku* with his *dôgu* is absolute. They are just "That".

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to combine the insights and concerns of performance with the methods and strategies of scholarship to look at the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition, with the belief that the intersection of these two approaches will provide a valid understanding of the tradition. The opening chapters described my position as both performer and scholar, or participant within the *honkyoku* tradition and outside observer of that tradition. It also introduced the two-fold aim of this thesis: to enhance our understanding of the tradition by looking at the nature of transmission of *honkyoku* and to disseminate that understanding. In subsequent chapters, the environment in which this study was undertaken was described from a number of perspectives. These included the literary context in which this thesis was located (Chapter 2), a historical account of the *honkyoku* tradition (Chapter 3), the genealogy of “*Reibo*”, the piece central to the analysis (Chapter 4), and an exploration of the theoretical and philosophical bases from which an analysis of *honkyoku* could be undertaken (Chapter 5).

A number of specific questions about the *shakuhachi honkyoku* tradition have been asked in this thesis, in particular questions about the processes of transmission within that tradition. Is the nature of the transmission of *honkyoku* perceived differently by different teachers and students? How does the transmission from teacher to student, from individual to individual, and from lineage to lineage differ? What can be learned of the transmission of “*Reibo*” by looking at the processes of performing the piece? What, precisely, is transmitted?

In the course of the thesis all of these questions have been addressed, if not fully answered. Three different ways of perceiving the *honkyoku* and the nature of its transmission were discussed with reference to the ideology of a number of *shakuhachi* players: Inoue’s ideology of *honkyoku* as object, Aoki’s ideology of *honkyoku* as music, and the ideology of *honkyoku* as transcending both object and music shared by Uramoto, Yokoyama, Watazumi, and others (see pp.[287-304](#)). In the analysis (Chapter 6), a comparison of ten performances of players who represent primarily the third ideology showed that many of the patterns of similarities and differences observed between the performances correspond to transmission patterns between teacher and student, within lineages, and between individuals (pp.[376-416](#)). In most cases, performances by teacher and student displayed the most similarity, for example Watazumi and Yokoyama. Performances of the same lineage, for example, the Uramoto-Watazumi-Yokoyama lineage, also displayed more similarities than performances of different lineages (pp.[384-385](#)).

In many cases, however, a high degree of variation could be observed between members of the same lineage and between players in a teacher-student relationship. This is especially evident with regard to the relationship between

Uramoto and Watazumi (pp.403-416). As explained above (p.403-404), although according to the genealogy chart Uramoto taught “*Reibo*” to Watazumi, Watazumi clearly repudiates the notion that Uramoto was his teacher. This is reflected in performance by differences between the two.

A notable example of this can be seen in the details of the process of performing the distinctive melodic formula known as *reibo no te*. An analysis of these details (pp.391-392) brought to light a process of producing certain notes in *reibo no te* which appear to be additions distinctive to Watazumi. These and other variations may be expressions of Watazumi’s understanding of the concept of *honjin no kyoku* (‘the piece being that of the performer’) (pp.229, 255) or *honjin no shirabe* (‘searching for one’s original self’) (pp.267-269). Watazumi is not the only player whose performance exhibits such a feature. All of the players represented in the analysis show, in the degree of variation of their performances, an appreciation of this concept.

The question, what precisely is transmitted, is one that can be addressed but perhaps never fully answered. The analyses support the conclusion that none of what is transmitted in the *honkyoku* tradition can be described precisely with words alone. Rephrasing the question: What is transmitted in the *honkyoku* tradition? The only short answer this thesis can provide is: Many things and nothing.

One conclusion, demonstrated empirically in Chapter 6 by the analyses of the ten transcriptions, is that there is an indefinable, even mysterious something which is conceptualized as “*Reibo*” and manifested in all of the performances represented by the ten transcriptions. The analyses independently support the genealogy chart, which is based upon written and oral evidence, much of which is anecdotal (pp.173-196) in that the lines of transmission of “*Reibo*” fall within at least two main groups, “*Futaiken reibo*” and “*Shôganken reibo*”.

Evidence of a commonality can be found in the large number of similarities between the ten pieces, especially those made significant by their location and/or repetition. These similarities include the labelling, placement and content of formal divisions, cadential formulae, distinctive melodic formulae, in particular *reibo no te* (the “*Reibo*” fingering), and the high degree of correspondence of notes throughout the performances, especially those of significant duration (pp.371-376). With the common identity of the ten performances established, comparisons between the pieces were made, revealing patterns of similarities and differences.

These comparisons reveal, notwithstanding numerous commonalities, a high degree of diversity and variation between the ten performances. Not only is the amount of variation large, but the number of patterns of variation is great. Patterns of similarities and differences frequently correspond to either one of the two groups, “*Futaiken reibo*” or “*Shôganken reibo*”, or to one of the lineages of transmission. Many of the observed variations can be traced to Watazumi’s performance (pp.403-416). Importantly, however, many variations in the patterns of transmission which occur repeatedly cannot be

ascribed entirely either to differences in group of piece or lineage, or to individual idiosyncrasies of performers.

A possible explanation for these idiosyncrasies may lie in the fact that just as *honkyoku* were composed, performed, and transmitted for a number of centuries in an atmosphere of largely unstructured interchange, interchange and cross-fertilization continue today. For centuries, *honkyoku* were transmitted by beggar “straw mat priests” (薦僧 *komosô*), who lived at the lower fringes of their society (p.94). Some structure was imposed upon the interchange between these beggar priests by the organization and official recognition of the Fuke sect in the early seventeenth century. Even after the establishment of the Fuke sect, many *honkyoku* players, whose name had been “upgraded” to “priests of nothingness” (虚無僧 *komusô*), continued their wanderings around the countryside. They also continued to teach to and be taught by other equally mendicant *komusô*, an ever-changing repertoire of *honkyoku* (pp.102-135).

After the end of the Fuke sect and the official status of the *komusô*’s way of life in the last decade of the nineteenth century, the *honkyoku* tradition at first glance appears largely to have been transmitted within secular organizations such as the *ryû*. Because these organizations were primarily bureaucratic in their approach and function, they were not conducive to the diversity and variation resulting from the constant interchange between *komusô* (pp.149-164). Examples of this kind of approach to *shakuhachi honkyoku* can still be seen in the ideology of two contemporary members of the tradition, Inoue and Aoki (pp.288-296).

A richness of diversity and variation in the *honkyoku* tradition continued to persist after the abolishment of the Fuke sect and continues to be maintained today in spite of the pervasive influence of bureaucratic *shakuhachi* organizations (cf.pp.250-251) and ideologies. This diverse richness can be seen in both exterior elements such as titles of pieces and names and placement of formal divisions, and in interior elements such as embellishments and fingering methods. In the case of “*Reibo*” pieces, an example of this diversity can be found in the degree of complexity in which material appears to cross over between the two groups represented in the transcriptions. A great deal of cross-over seems to have occurred not only before the differentiation of the two groups, but after they developed their distinct titles and features. This is manifested in patterns of similarities and differences between performances in the two different groups, including those of the same performer (pp.371-416).

Although the institution of the wandering *komusô* has not existed since the late 1800s, the ideology of interchange and cross-fertilization of the Edo period and earlier appears not to have died out, but has continued to exist up to the present. There may no longer be *shakuhachi*-playing monks travelling on foot from *komusô* temple to temple exchanging their *honkyoku* and in the process varying and changing them. Instead, though travelling more by train or plane than on foot, there nevertheless continue to be *shakuhachi* players who transmit *honkyoku* between each other with a similar spirit of interchange and

an understanding of the variable nature of *honkyoku*, as was held by many of the Edo period “priests of nothingness”.

In the last several decades, cross-fertilization of pieces within the *honkyoku* tradition has also been encouraged by the advent of readily available recordings. Recordings of pieces representing numerous versions of a single *honkyoku*, and different performances of the same version both by different players and by the same performer at different times are now available for repeated listening. Variations and changes in the *honkyoku* repertoire and in the pieces within that repertoire thus continue to occur as they have always occurred.

A major observation of this thesis concerns the variation and change that can be attributed to Watazumi, the person who most strongly denies any sources of transmission of his *honkyoku*, and who exhibits the most divergency in his performances. The correlation between how transmission is conceived and how “*Reibo*” is transmitted can be seen in the performances of the other performers as well. Watazumi is at one extreme regarding the conception of transmission and its effects on the degree of variation. If analyzed, performances of players who conceive transmission as do Inoue and Aoki, would most likely occupy the other extreme.

Much of the uniqueness of Watazumi’s *honkyoku* performances and his philosophy underlying those performances can be detected without analyzing transcriptions. The analysis in this thesis has shown specific elements of variation and their locations in his performance of the two “*Reibo*” pieces. Also, although his performances exhibit by far the most diversity and variation amongst those represented by the ten transcriptions, we can conclude from the analysis that Watazumi nevertheless remains very much within the *honkyoku* tradition in terms of the kinds of variations and changes he makes. Even in Watazumi’s performances, there appears to be little “original” material (pp.408-409). Many of the differences between his performances and those of the other performers have to do with the variation and placement of material which can be found elsewhere, rather than with the inclusion of original material.

A second observation that can be made from the analysis is that variation occurs more at certain parameters than at others. For example, prominent notes such as those having durations of over two seconds are most likely to be transmitted and transmitted unchanged, while details such as embellishment are most likely to be transmitted with changes or not transmitted at all. Paradoxically, these details are important elements in the tradition, as evidenced by their prominence in tradition-based analyses. They are among the most talked about elements within the formal lesson.

Another area of variation is the length of phrases and their number in a piece and the breaths that occur between them. This might be considered anomalous to *honkyoku*, since the phrase is considered a fundamental structural unit of *honkyoku*, and since the breaths between the phrases are given as much importance as the phrases themselves. It might therefore be expected that,

because so much emphasis is placed on the breath and on the phrase as a structural unit, the placement of the breath and the number of phrases in a particular *honkyoku* would show stability rather than variability over the course of transmission.

From this observation one can make a theoretical conclusion about the individual nature of performance. Variability with regards to breath and phrasing is a prime indication of the importance placed upon the mindfulness that is needed to make each *honkyoku* performance a reflection of the absolutely unique situation that it is. The singularly different breathing capacity and control of each performer with each performance necessitates differences in phrasing. Thus, the musical product becomes subservient to the process of performing, which includes breathing. This is in stark contrast to what occurs in other genres of music, in which standardized phrasing is common, the placement of the breaths is dictated by the music, and the ideal manner of breathing is one that is unnoticed by the listener.

It must be remembered that this study, in which only ten performances by six performers are transcribed, cannot take into account the infinite number of possible performances at different times by each of the countless *honkyoku* performers. The issue of how the passage of time affects the transmission of *honkyoku* has, for the lack of data, only briefly been touched upon.

Scholarly approaches such as this thesis can never reflect the entire picture of the *honkyoku* tradition and its transmission, but they can shed a particular light on the subject that may not be apparent with other approaches. Nevertheless, transmission of *honkyoku* in the *shakuhachi* tradition includes far more than the transmission of just the notes and the technical details of performance. It is the transmission of “ideals”. The form that each individual’s ideals take may vary as much as the individuals themselves.

While each transcription is an analogue of only one performance by each individual performer, even a limited analysis of a limited data base such as the ten transcriptions used in this thesis provides a remarkable glimpse of the incredibly complex diversity and variability of the *shakuhachi* classical *honkyoku*. These two elements, diversity and variability, are two of the most fundamental defining features of *honkyoku*. That these two features can still be so readily observed confirms the enduring nature of this living tradition.

In addition to the above issues, the question of “insider/outsider”, first raised in Chapter 1, must be addressed. The ways in which the analyses were set up and executed necessitated an insider’s knowledge of “*Reibo*”. The lining up of the orthographically simplified transcriptions (pp. [359-369](#)), which was a crucial step in the analyses, was particularly dependent upon an understanding of the piece achieved only through the insider’s experience of performing “*Reibo*”.

One of the insights gained in the process of researching and writing this thesis has to do with the insider/outsider theme and how it relates to Watazumi’s *honkyoku*. The problems associated with any paradigm of insider/outsider with

regards to the *shakuhachi* tradition are solved instantly by Watazumi. In his repudiation of the teacher-student relationship, of the notion of lineage and transmission and of the labels *honkyoku* and *shakuhachi* (pp.415-416), Watazumi transcends the insider/outsider dichotomy, and arrives at a unifying state of being eloquently referred to in the *shakuhachi* tradition with the expression, *ichi on jōbutsu* (一音成仏, ‘one sound attaining Buddhahood’). In the “one sound” there is no inside and no outside.

A series of questions have haunted me throughout the writing of this thesis, which may have contributed to the seven years required to complete it. Part of the intuitive understanding of *honkyoku* and its transmission is the knowledge that that intuitive understanding comes from direct experience. As a *honkyoku* performer, I have from the beginning of this project wondered if studying *honkyoku* in a scholarly manner was either valid or necessary. Would any sort of understanding acquired through scholarly endeavours bear any relation to the absolute understanding of the player during the act of performing *honkyoku*? Even if some kind of non-intuitive understanding of *honkyoku* could be achieved (the first part of my initial aim), would it be possible to transmit that understanding to the reader (the second part of my initial aim)?

From the vantage point of having finished the research and all the writing of this thesis, save the final paragraph of this conclusion, I can, in retrospect, gratefully answer all of the above questions with an emphatic yes! With the act of submitting this thesis, it becomes a part of the *honkyoku* tradition, one of its many aspects. The “essence” of *honkyoku*, though beyond the ability of words to describe, is in its very limitlessness, manifested in all aspects of the tradition, including this thesis. The words in this thesis are offered in the spirit described by Aitken:

...we must use words. How should we use them? By playing with them, as [Chang-tsu and Bashō] both did, and as did Huang-po, Yun-men, Ch’ang-sha, and countless other Zen teachers. The purpose is to present something, not to mean something. Meaning something destroys it.

(Aitken 1978:127)

The words in this thesis present something, but do not attempt to mean anything. In the process of my researching, organizing, and finally presenting these words as author, and with the act of you, the reader, receiving them, transmission of *honkyoku* takes place.