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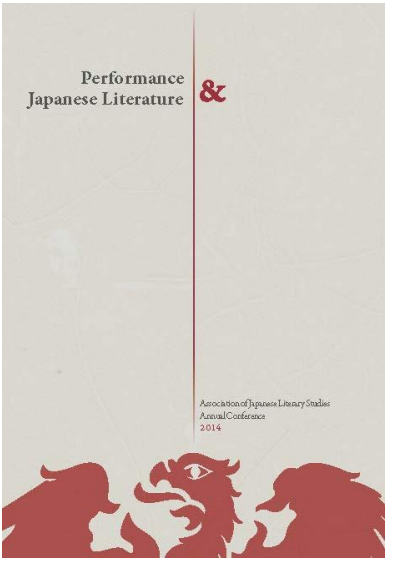

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Performing Texts: The Blind Musician Ogino Chiichi and the Tradition of *Heikyoku* in Mid- to Late Tokugawa Japan

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Introduction

The literary epic *The Tale of the Heike* had been popularly performed as an oral tale in Japanese society since the medieval period. This lyrical rendition or *heikyoku* 平曲 was traditionally associated with the *biwa hōshi* 琵琶法師, blind musicians who specialized in narrating the tale with the accompaniment of a lute called the *biwa* 琵琶. The heyday of *heikyoku*, however, passed as the status-based form of political rule was established during the Tokugawa period (1600–1868). The reorganized *tōdōza* 当道座, an institution founded in the 1300s to protect the traditions of the *biwa hōshi*, was turned into one of the governing arms of the Tokugawa *bakufu*; as a result of this transformation in the political character of the *tōdōza*, the emphasis gradually shifted away from music, and the transmission of *heikyoku* within the *tōdōza* underwent profound changes.

For the purpose of my present inquiry, the study of *heikyoku* of the Tokugawa period is important for understanding the significance of *heikyoku* to the continued existence of the *tōdōza* as well as the role of *heikyoku* in the interactions between blind *tōdōza* and society. *Heikyoku* was interwoven into the fabric of the *tōdōza*, and despite the rise of other musical professions, it retained a symbolic value. How *heikyoku* was transformed over time raises the crucial question of the authority of lineages and sects. The first division of the parent lineage took place in the early Muromachi period (1337–1573), resulting in two distinct schools within the *tōdōza*: the Ichikata-*ryū* 一方流 and the Yasaka-*ryū* 八坂流.[1] The Ichikata lineage continued to be the more influential and dominant of the two, but disagreements over stylistic issues gave rise to two main offshoots in the 1650s: the Maeda-*ryū* 前田流 and the Hatano-*ryū* 波多野流.[2]

[1] Throughout the Tokugawa period, six musical sects--Myōgan-*ha* (or Myōkan-*ha*) 妙観派, Tojima-*ha* (also Kojima-*ha* or Toshima-*ha*) 戸嶋派, Genshō-*ha* 源照派, and Shidō-*ha* 師堂派 were of the Ichikata lineage, while Myōmon-*ha* 妙聞派, and Ōyama-*ha* 大山派 belonged to the Yasaka lineage--buttressed these two lineages, which were transmitted through texts and discipleships.

[2] It should be noted that the six sects were not reorganized following the rise of the Maeda-*ryū* and the Hatano-*ryū*; the differences between the Maeda-*ryū* and the Hatano-*ryū* were less about sectarian affiliations than they were about stylistic choices, but significant overlaps between their respective texts suggest that there was some degree of fluid exchange between them. The laws of the *tōdōza*, though revised in 1692, did not make any reference to either of the two new lineages, and there is no evidence that the *tōdōza* made any effort to explicitly prohibit blind musicians from learning one style to the exclusion of the other.

I suggest that to a large extent, the scrutiny of *heikyoku* as text and performance is deeply tied to questions about the intricate intersections between the oral and textual dimensions of production. Yet, if *heikyoku* performers of the *tōdōza* were blind, what need did they have of texts? One explanation is that able-sighted hobbyists were increasingly involved in the performance of *heikyoku*. But, if this was indeed the case, how did the *tōdōza*, which had historically prized the role of its own blind musicians in the transmission of *heikyoku*, react towards outside learners? And, what consequences did the participation of hobbyists have for the identity of the *tōdōza*?

In this paper, I will focus on the blind musician Ogino Chiichi 荻野知一 (1731–1801) and his chief work *Heike mabushi* 平家正節 completed in 1776 as a useful case study. Chiichi made important contributions to the growth and revitalization of *heikyoku*, and *Heike mabushi* was widely regarded as the authoritative guide to *heikyoku* performances of the *tōdōza* from the mid-Tokugawa period onwards. In my analysis, I will situate Chiichi in the complex system of lineages and discipleship that had come to define the internal organization of the *tōdōza*. I will also look at the composition of *Heike mabushi* and explore the links with *heikyoku* texts attributed to able-sighted hobbyists, most notably Yokoi Yayū's 横井也有 (1702–1783) *Heigo* 平語. In doing so, I argue that the production of these texts represents the connectivity of the *tōdōza* in society and, above all, embodies the growing access granted to interested able-sighted performers to the privileged traditions of the *tōdōza*.

Part 1: Chiichi's Biographical Background

It was no mere coincidence that from early on in the Tokugawa period, able-sighted persons like *haikai* poets and entertainers were interested in the genre of *heikyoku* for various reasons. For example, in the case of the Sōhen-*ryū* of the practitioners of *sadō* 茶道 ("tea ceremony"), *biwa* music had been integrated into the ritual setting and aesthetics. As a sign of the appeal of *heikyoku*, the poet Matsunaga Teitoku's 松永貞徳 (1571–1653) diary *Teitoku bunshū* 貞徳文集 highlighted that of all the musical genres, *heikyoku* was the favorite of able-sighted entertainers, including the tea experts of Sakai 堺, most notably Sen no Rikyū 千の利休 (1522–1591), Tsuda Sōgyū 津田宗及 (?–1591), and Yamaoka Sōmu 山岡宗無 (?–1595).[3] This wave of interest in *heikyoku* prefigured the boom of able-sighted disciples in later years that undercut the dominant position of blind musicians.

By the mid-1700s, the tradition of *heikyoku* was enriched by and, to some degree, diluted by diverse textual and musical interpretations. It was in this milieu that Ogino Chiichi emerged onto the scene as the foremost leader. According to several published biographical accounts, Chiichi came from a fairly humble background and worked his way up the hierarchy of the *tōdōza*.[4]

[3] *Teitoku bunshū*, *Kaihyō sōsho*, vol. 4 (Kyoto: Kōseikaku Shoten, 1928), 84.

[4] The representative publications discussing Chiichi's life include the following: Atsumi Kaworu,

He was born in Hiroshima domain in Kyōhō 17 (1732) in Sarugaku-machi 猿楽町. Though not congenitally blind, he lost his vision completely in Genbun 2 (1737) when he was five or six years old. Exactly when Chiichi joined the *tōdōza* cannot be confirmed, but in accordance with current practice, it would appear that he was made a disciple of a high-ranking representative of the *tōdōza* in the local area, who was, in this case, Tanizaki *kengyō* 谷崎検校.[5] While learning the basics of *heikyoku*, *sōkyoku*, and *sangen* from Tanizaki *kengyō*, Chiichi was trained, quite possibly simultaneously, as an acupuncturist by Yoshimasa Tōdō 吉益東洞 (1702–1773), a native Hiroshima physician of the Kohō-*ha* 古方派 (the Kohō sect). Chiichi made it to the rank of *kōtō*, but despite his best efforts, did not find much success practicing acupuncture. As a result, at around the age of twenty, with Tōdō's help, he sought new employment in Kyoto.

Chiichi's years in Kyoto were productive, marked by a revival in his musical career, a whole-hearted devotion to the mastery of *heikyoku*, and a deepening of his connections with the elites of the *tōdōza*.[6] In Hōreki 3 (1753), he attracted the attention of the *sōkengyō* 惣検校, the top office holder of the *tōdōza*, and through the latter's introduction, was accepted as a disciple of Terao *kōtō* 寺尾勾当 and inducted into the Maeda lineage. However, three years later, as explained by Niwa Keichū 丹羽敬中, one of Chiichi's many able-sighted disciples who wrote the preface to *Heike mabushi*, Chiichi did not finish his training, learning all but the final two sets of secret tunes--the *daihiji* 大秘事 ("The Greater Secret Tunes") and the *shōhiji* 小秘事 ("The Lesser Secret Tunes")--because of Terao *kōtō*'s untimely passing.[7] As such, in that same year, arrangements were made for Chiichi to be adopted as one of the disciples of Kawase *kengyō* 河瀬検校. Unlike Terao *kōtō*, Kawase *kengyō* belonged to the Hatano lineage. This switch of masters now placed Chiichi in the unique position of having established direct ties to the two lineages.

"Ogino kengyō den: hoi," in *Heike mabushi no kenkyū*, eds. Atsumi Kaworu and Okumura Mitsuo (Kyoto: Daigakudō Shoten, 1980), 183–230; Komoda, *Heike no ongaku: Tōdō no dentō*, 57–60; Ozaki Masatada, "Ogino kengyō to Heike mabushi no kōkeisha," in *DVD-ban Ozaki-ke bon Heike mabushi kaisetsu*, ed. Ogino kengyō Kenshōkai (Nagoya: Sōkō Eshikksu, 2011), 49–58. Chiichi's year of birth is said to have been either 1731 or 1732. The debate involves the dating of the memorial dedicated to Chiichi, and a possible calculation error in the original preface of *Heike mabushi*.

[5] Ozaki, "Ogino kengyō to Heike mabushi no kōkeisha," 51.

[6] Ozaki, "Ogino kengyō to Heike mabushi no kōkeisha," 52–54.

[7] Heike Mabushi Kankōkai, ed., *Heike mabushi*, vol. 1 (Kyoto: Daigakudō Shoten, 1974), 5–6. For a biography of Niwa Keichū, see Ozaki, "Ogino kengyō to Heike mabushi no kōkeisha," 55. Keichū was a member of the samurai, and retired in Meiwa 1765. He was a studious learner of *heikyoku* and wrote the preface to *Heike mabushi* a couple of years before he passed away in An'ei 7 (1778). Two versions of the preface have been discovered: the first one dated the sixth month of An'ei 5 (1776) accompanied the draft copy of *Heike mabushi* now in the possession of the Tateyama household, and the second one dated three months later when the final draft of *Heike mabushi* was published. This second version is commonly referred to as the Ozaki jobun because the original is owned by the Ozaki household. The Ozaki edition of the preface and *Heike mabushi* will be used as the basis for discussion in this paper. See also Ozaki Masatada, *Heike chūkō no so: Ogino kengyō* (Nagoya: Aichiken Kyōdo Shiryō Kankōkai, 1976), 102–103.

It was during this time in Meiwa 7 (1770) that Chiichi departed Kyoto and embarked on a pilgrimage to the Ise shrines. On his return journey, he sojourned in Nagoya for a few days, a visit that would change the course of his life. Why he chose to make a stopover in Nagoya is not explained but it was likely because he had accepted the invitation of the lord of Nagoya, an avid fan of *heikyoku*, and wanted to assess the flourishing musical scene there, which he had heard much about.[8] Shortly thereafter, the *heikyoku* performers of Nagoya, Keichū being one of them, earnestly beseeched Chiichi to move from Kyoto to Nagoya so as to supervise and lead them. In his twilight years, near the end of his stay in Nagoya, Chiichi had made great strides in promoting *heikyoku* and produced disciples of note. In An'ei 5 (1776), Chiichi completed the draft of *Heike mabushi*. This work was, in due time, circulated widely outside of Nagoya and gained currency among *heikyoku* performers of the *tōdōza* as well as able-sighted hobbyists.

Part 2: Composing Heike mabushi

Underpinning *Heike mabushi* was Chiichi's precise blueprint for instructing his disciples with specific milestones to be crossed. Borrowing Atsumi Kaworu's classificatory terminology, the content of *Heike mabushi* can be broken down into the following sections: the appendix or introduction (one volume); *hira mono* 平物 (thirty volumes; one hundred and sixty-one *ku*); *denju mono* 伝授物 (five volumes; twenty-eight *ku*); *kanjo no maki* 灌頂巻 or the Initiates' Chapter (one volume; five *ku*); *ai no mono* 間の物 (one volume; thirteen *ku*); *shōhiji* (one volume; two *ku*); and *daihiji* (one volume; three *ku*).[9] In terms of their melodic qualities and styles, the *ku* of *Heike mabushi* varied between soft, expressive sentimentality and melodramatic, heroic grandeur, characteristics of *fushi mono* and *hiroi mono* respectively, the two main categories of musical-narrative mood.

The prescribed course in *heikyoku* progressed through successive stages from the *hira mono* to the *daihiji*.[10] In the initial phase, after a disciple had memorized the first fifty *ku* of the *hira mono*, he was permitted to learn the thirteen *ku* of the *yomi mono* 読物 (*ku* that focused on imperial edicts, decrees, prayers, letters, and replies), a subclass of the *denju mono*. The disciple then proceeded to the following phase, studying the next one hundred *ku* of the *hira mono*; having done that, he memorized and performed the remaining *ku* of the *denju mono* namely the *soroemono* 揃物 (*ku* with titles ending with the particle *-zoroe* which described rosters), *enshōmono* 炎上物 (*ku* with conflagrations as their subject matter like "The Burning of Miidera temple" *Miidera enshō*; 三井

[8] For a discussion of this trip to Nagoya, see Ozaki, "Ogino kengyō to Heike mabushi no kōkeisha," 54.

[9] Atsumi, *Heike mabushi: kaidai*, vol. 2, 10–14.

[10] Kinda'ichi Haruhiko, *Heikyoku kō* (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1998), 18–19.

寺炎上), and *gokumono* 五句物 (five *ku*: "The Rebuilding of the Great Pagoda" *Daitō no konryū*; 大塔の建立, "Mount Kōya" *Kōya no maki*; 高野巻, "Genbō" 玄肪, "The Seinan Detached Palace" *Seinan no rikyū*; 城南離宮, "The Moving of the Capital to Fukuhara" *Miyako utsuri*; 都遷). Finally, when the disciple demonstrated a solid grasp of all of the *hira mono* and the *denju mono* to the full satisfaction of his instructor, he earned the privilege of taking lessons in the secret tunes, starting with the introduction to the five *ku* of the Initiates' Chapter and culminating with the mastery of the *daihiji*. Upon completion, he graduated as a full-fledged *heikyoku* performer.

In *Heike mabushi*, Chiichi presented *The Tale of the Heike* through *heikyoku* in ways that reinvented conventions. A reflection of his ingenuity, the new layout of *Heike mabushi* offered vignettes of the tale. The most important innovation was the rearrangement of the *ku* from the twelve chapters of the *Kakuichi-bon* 覚一本 and the *Rufu-bon* 流布本 into the condensed form of the *hira mono*. Instead of narrating the chapters continuously from start to finish, the first twenty volumes of the *hira mono* were sorted into pairs: volume one was paired up with volume two, and three with four, and so on until volume twenty.[11]

The first half of a pair contained a selection of six *ku*, one from each of the first six chapters of the tale, while the *ku* of the latter six chapters followed in the second half. For example, in volume one, the six *ku* extracted--*Suzuki* 鱸 ("The Sea bass"), *Sotoba nagashi* 卒塔婆流 ("Stupas Cast Afloat"), *Mumon no sata* 無文沙汰 ("The Unadorned Sword"), *Itsukushima kangyo* 厳島還御 ("The Imperial Return from Itsukushima"), *Tsukimi* 月見 ("Moon-viewing"), and *Kōyō* 紅葉 ("Autumn Leaves")--were drawn from chapters one to six respectively.[12] Volume two, on the other hand, completed the pair with six *ku* from the other chapters--*Chikubushima mōde* 竹生島詣 ("The Visit to Chikubushima"), *Usa gyōkō* 宇佐行幸 ("The Reel of Thread"), *Ikezuki* 生喰 ("The Matter of Ikezuki"), *Kaidō kudari* 海道下 ("The Journey Down the Eastern Sea Road"), *Nasu no Yoichi* 那須与一 ("Nasu no Yoichi"), and *Tosabō kirare* 土佐坊被斬 ("The Execution of Tosabō").

Since all ten pairs of the *hira mono* differed in the combinations of *ku*, each pair stood as a stand-alone microcosm and could be read or performed in place of the lengthy epic. Aesthetically, these clever permutations also affected the semantics of narrative continuity and disjuncture; they expanded the interpretative scope of the tale through text and music, and gave rise to possibilities for appreciating the tale anew by dividing it up into enclosed, self-contained teleological worlds of actors and events. The leftover *ku* that did not fit into the ten pairs were extraneous and thus laid out sequentially from

[11] To be more precise, each pair was made up of a *jō* 上 and a *ge* 下, and though I have addressed the pairs as one-two, three-four, five-six, and so on, the traditional classification would have them as volume one: *jō* and *ge*, volume two: *jō* and *ge*, and volume three: *jō* and *ge* respectively.

[12] Kinda'ichi, *Heikyoku kō*, 11. The titles of the *ku* have been rendered in English based on the translations provided in Helen Craigh McCullough's *The Tale of the Heike*. See McCullough, trans., *The Tale of the Heike* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 20–22.

chapters one to twelve in the remaining ten volumes (twenty-one to thirty) of the *hira mono*.

There is little doubt that Yokoi Yayū's *Heigo* was one of the underlying sources of *Heike mabushi*.[13] Based in Nagoya, Yayū was almost thirty years older than Chiichi and had been active as a prolific composer of *haikai* poetry and a *heikyoku* performer. *Heigo* preceded *Heike mabushi* by roughly twenty-two years, and they were presumably produced in the vein of the evolving stylistic standards of the Maeda lineage. *Heigo* was composed of fifteen text volumes; like *Heike mabushi*, the format of *Heigo* appeared haphazard, and the *ku* were selected from *The Tale of the Heike* in no particular order.

At the literary level, the parallels between *Heigo* and *Heike mabushi* are significant insofar as they illustrate that able-sighted amateur hobbyists, who had no formal membership in the *tōdōza*, were inextricably enmeshed in the process of composing *heikyoku* texts and music. As far as we can tell, other than Keichū, mentioned earlier as the author of the preface, two other able-sighted disciples, namely Matsudaira Kunzan 松平君山 (1697–1783) and Chimura Moronari 千村諸成 (1727–1790), participated in drafting the content of *Heike mabushi*.[14] Chiichi had more than just a passing acquaintance with *Heigo*; considering its popularity among able-sighted hobbyists, it is not difficult to imagine that he learned much about it through his well-connected, able-sighted disciples and probably had them recite it to him.

Conclusion

As illustrated in Chiichi's composition of *Heike mabushi*, through the active involvement of *heikyoku* fans and enthusiasts, *heikyoku* texts written by them were held in high regard alongside *Heike mabushi* and also widely circulated as the new models of composition within the *tōdōza*. This fluid mode of cross-referencing texts does not come as a surprise; the *tōdōza* was increasingly dependent on hobbyists because they compensated for the lack of sight of blind performers. Also, as can be inferred from the attention paid to notations of style, melody, and intonation, these hobbyists played an instrumental role in organizing and categorizing the musical and lyrical components through visual cues for the proper transmission of *heikyoku*. As if a harbinger of an unfolding trend that peaked in the 1800s, the oral transmission of secret tunes between blind masters and disciples was undermined; with the distinct advantage of sight, able-sighted performers were free to write, read, and circulate these tunes in writing and bypassed the rules that bound blind musicians of the *tōdōza*.

[13] Komoda, *Heike no ongaku: Tōdō no dentō*, 150 and 173–175.

[14] Hosono Yōsai, *Mugura no shizuku: shoka zatsudan*, *Nagoya sōsho sanpen*: vol. 12 (Nagoya: Nagoya-shi Kyōiku Iinkai, 1981), 419.