

***Wadaiko* in Japan and the United States: The Intercultural History of a Musical Genre**

by

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Benjamin Pachter, PhD

University of Pittsburgh, 2013

This dissertation is a musical history of *wadaiko*, a genre that emerged in the mid-1950s featuring Japanese taiko drums as the main instruments. Through the analysis of compositions and performances by artists in Japan and the United States, I reveal how Japanese musical forms like *hōgaku* and *matsuri-bayashi* have been melded with non-Japanese styles such as jazz. I also demonstrate how the art form first appeared as performed by large ensembles, but later developed into a wide variety of other modes of performance that included small ensembles and soloists. Additionally, I discuss the spread of *wadaiko* from Japan to the United States, examining the effect of interactions between artists in the two countries on the creation of repertoire; in this way, I reveal how a musical genre develops in an intercultural environment. Further, I explore the relationship between compositions and reoccurring themes of discussion like ‘tradition,’ thus illuminating the relationship between music making and talking about music.

The majority of English-language scholastic literature about *wadaiko* is concerned with the social context of the genre. Similarly, most studies have dealt with groups that emerged prior to 1980, focusing upon the large ensembles that arose during this time rather than the soloists and small ensembles that have emerged in recent decades. With my focus on repertoire, and the construction of a history from the beginning of the genre to the present, I look to broaden the scope of academic discourse about *wadaiko*.

This dissertation begins with an overview of my main research aims, prominent theoretical issues, my research scope and methodology, and a literature review. I discuss the chronological development of *wadaiko* in Japan and the United States in Chapters 2 through 7, focusing upon several groups and individual artists and their music, identifying how they have guided the development of the genre. Chapter 8 serves as the dissertation's conclusion, in which I summarize the previous chapters while also examining the relationship between music making and representations of 'tradition,' conceptions of originality, issues of performance rights, and the transmission of *wadaiko* knowledge and the role of language in this process.

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PREFACE

About Translations

Unless otherwise stated in a citation, all translations from Japanese sources are my own, and have not been published in any format.

About Romanization

I will generally be using Modified Hepburn as my primary romanization system, except for instances where a different romanization of a word is the accepted version (for example, Tokyo rather than Tōkyō, Noh rather than *nō*).

As there are several different systems in use, some quotations of other author's works may feature different spellings. In particular, some authors may not use macrons in words where I have chosen to use “ō” or “ū.”

Meanwhile, even as the majority of Japanese words in this dissertation will be written in italics, those words that are established parts of the English language will be written in normal text (as indicated in the 16th Edition of the Chicago Manual of Style, which I am using as the primary style guide for this dissertation); for example, kabuki rather than *kabuki*.

About Names

When giving names in this dissertation, I will present them in the order used within their respective cultures. Thus, for United States-born performers I will present them Personal Name –

Family Name, while Japanese names will be presented Family Name – Personal Name. The only exceptions will be when a particular name order is used by Japanese artists in English texts; for example, Kaoly Asano, leader of GOCOO – discussed in Chapter 7 – rather than Asano Kaori, the normal transliteration of her name.

About Composition and Style Names

Composition names will be given in quotation marks. Genre and style names will be given in italics (unless part of common English-language discussion, as discussed above). For example, “Yatai-bayashi” is a composition performed by Ondekoza/Kodo, while *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* is the regional performance style on which it is based.

About Recordings

The recordings consulted during the writing process have been taken from a combination of different sources. The majority are or have been commercially available in the United States and Japan (some having gone out of print), and information concerning these releases will be included during relevant passages. Additionally, I have utilized videos made publically available on YouTube, and will include both the website link and access date during the course of discussions.

About Transcriptions

I use in the majority of transcriptions in this dissertation a percussion clef (also called neutral clef), a particular form of Western staff notation used for percussion music when instruments do not have definite pitch (even if they may have relative pitch; that is, high-medium-low).

The amount of lines on the staff depends on the amount of pitches in the music being transcribed. Most of the transcriptions in this dissertation feature a single-lined staff, as there is no particular pitch or pitch relationships being played on the taiko. In cases where there are two pitch relationships, high and low, then I may use a single-line staff with notes above and below the staff representing high and low (respectively). If more pitches are required, then a five-line staff is used.

In cases where transcriptions of an instrument with definite pitch are found, I use the normal clef for that instrument.

Unless otherwise noted, all transcriptions contained within this dissertation have been created by me.

Pertinent copyrights for repertoire transcribed for this document belong to their owners, with composers acknowledged in their respective chapters.

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The members of Pittsburgh Taiko

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Thank you all.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The North American Taiko Conference (NATC), first held in 1997, draws people bi-annually to the west coast of the United States to participate in what is advertised as “the largest gathering of taiko practitioners in the world.”¹ A celebration of all things *wadaiko* (a modern musical genre featuring Japanese taiko), the NATC program contains workshops, discussion panels, lectures, and concerts. In between sessions, meanwhile, the conference’s Taiko Marketplace features vendors offering limited-time conference deals on drums, drumsticks, and other *wadaiko*-related paraphernalia.

While it is called the ‘North American’ Taiko Conference, the event is attended by participants from around the world. A listing of attending groups in the program of the 2011 conference at Stanford University included participants from the United States, Japan, Canada, England, Brazil, and Hong Kong, demonstrating how *wadaiko* has spread in its six decades of existence; that year, Kagemusha Taiko from Exeter, England became the first non-North American group to perform in the annual Friday evening Taiko Ten concert, an event limited to community groups and “with the goal of showcasing the rich and varied music of the North

¹ <http://www.taikoconference.org/about-natc> (Accessed July 16, 2012).

It was reported that over 800 people participated in the 2011 conference.

(<http://www.taikoconference.org/content/thank-you-everyone>, accessed December 13, 2012)

American taiko world and beyond.”² Meanwhile, Japanese taiko manufacturers and distributors have a large presence in the Taiko Marketplace, while each year a number of performers come from Japan to lead workshops.

A central event during the conference is the Saturday night Taiko Jam concert. Sponsored by Los Angeles’ Japanese American Cultural & Community Center, which also provides a venue for the conference when it is in Los Angeles, the Taiko Jam features groups invited to perform by the NATC Executive Committee and Advisory Committee. Five groups participated in the 2011 Taiko Jam, held at Memorial Auditorium at Stanford University and advertised as “representing the full dynamic range of North America”: the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble from Honolulu, Hawaii; Soh Daiko from New York, New York; Inochi Taiko from Seattle, Washington; Mirai Daiko from Arvada, Colorado; and San Francisco Taiko Dojo from San Francisco, California.³

While each Taiko Jam presents a diverse range of *wadaiko* performances, the 2011 concert was particularly eclectic. The first group that performed was the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble, who began their segment with a piece entitled “Jugoya.” Composed in 2000 by Kenny Endo, a professional *wadaiko* solo artist who is the leader of the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble, “Jugoya” is a melodic instrument-centric work, with drums primarily providing rhythmic support. The instrumentation for “Jugoya” is quite flexible, depending on the musicians available for a performance; the ensemble featured at the 2011 Taiko Jam was one of the larger groups

² <http://www.taikoconference.org/taiko-ten-concert> (accessed February 25, 2013)

³ <http://www.taikoconference.org/2011-conference/taiko-jam-concert> (accessed July 16, 2012)

The wording in the quotation is intentional, reflecting a decision by the concert organizers to include only groups from North America on the program. See Chapter 8 for more on this subject.

brought together by Endo, taking advantage of the many performers in attendance at the conference (Figure 1). That evening, Endo stood at the center of the stage behind a set of three different-sized taiko, often used to play a repeated rhythmic pattern supporting the melody in a manner similar to a Western drum set. On each side of Endo were performers playing small rope-tied taiko called *shime-daiko*, an African *djembe* (a wooden-bodied, skinned goblet drum), and two Cuban *congas* (tall, narrow single-headed drums); these provided both rhythmic accent and a secondary rhythmic ostinato alongside Endo; in addition, there were several performers carrying *katsugi okedō-daiko*, barrel-shaped rope-tightened drums slung over the shoulder with a padded cloth strap.⁴



Figure 1. The Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble, performing "Jugoya" at the 2011 Taiko Jam Memorial Auditorium, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, August 20, 2011. Photo by Yuri Yoshida. Used with permission.

⁴ Pictures and brief descriptions of the primary Japanese instruments used in *wadaiko* performance – including taiko – referenced throughout this dissertation can be found in Appendix A.

The melodic section of the ensemble was positioned upon a riser behind the drums, with performers playing a vibraphone, a *koto* (Japanese zither), and two bamboo flutes called *fue*. Additionally, there was also a large taiko called an *ō-daiko* on this back riser that Endo moved to in the middle of the piece for an extended improvisation.⁵

“Jugoya” was immediately followed by “Moonwind,” another of Endo’s compositions. In contrast to “Jugoya,” which normally features a large ensemble, “Moonwind” can be played by as few as one person: for the Taiko Jam, the ensemble consisted of Kenny Endo on the *ō-daiko*, Mochizuki Saburo on *ko-tsuzumi* (a hand-held, hourglass-shaped drum commonly used in Japanese Noh and kabuki theater), and Suzuki Kyosuke on *fue*. “Moonwind” is a quiet piece, with Endo using varying types of drumsticks to produce a variety of sounds and rhythms on the *ō-daiko* (including some rhythms taken from kabuki); in addition to using drumsticks nearly one foot long and one to two inches thick (the standard sticks for the drum), he also uses long bamboo sticks and shorter wooden ones with the tips wrapped in cloth, each creating a different sound.

The diverse nature of the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble’s set continued with “Noon Cycles.” Whereas “Jugoya” features different melodic instruments, and “Moonwind” is a quiet work highlighting the *ō-daiko*, “Noon Cycles” is a primarily rhythmic composition, with twelve musicians each playing individual sets of three taiko. It features sudden dynamic changes, time signature shifts, and composite rhythmic patterns in which performers simultaneously play different rhythms with each hand. At the same time, however, the work uses combinations of high-, medium-, and low-pitched drums to create patterns with a quasi-melodic element.

⁵ For a discussion of instrument terminology – concerning *wadaiko*, taiko, *ō-daiko*, and the other terms used in this introduction, see section 1.2.3.

Next was something rarely seen in a Taiko Jam concert, as four members of the ensemble presented an *Edo Kotobuki Jishi*, a traditional lion dance of Edo (the old name for Tokyo). A small ensemble of three people sitting on a riser – Kenny Endo on *fue*, Eien Hunter-Ishikawa on a handheld gong called an *atarigane*, and Mochizuki Saburo on a set of two small taiko – accompanied a dance by Suzuki Kyosuke, who hid underneath a long cloth attached to a wooden lion’s head with a long white mane he carried in his hands as he moved around the stage (Figure 2). Typically performed to bring good fortune and happiness, this performance of the *Edo Kotobuki Jishi* was a particular treat for those members of the audience that had spent the first half of the week learning the dance from Suzuki as part of NATC’s Summer Taiko Institute.



Figure 2. Members of the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble performing an *Edo Kotobuki Jishi*

Memorial Auditorium, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, August 20, 2011.

Photo by Yuri Yoshida. Used with permission.

The Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble’s portion of the concert concluded with “Tatsumaki,” composed by group member Hiroshi Tanaka. Whereas the ensemble began the concert with a

melody-heavy piece, “Tatsumaki” put the attention on the drums for the end of the segment. Four medium-sized taiko were positioned at the front of the stage on small stands that placed them parallel to the floor, the drumheads facing a performer that stood in between each drum. Four more drums were set towards the back riser (two on each side of the stage), resting at an approximately 45-degree angle on slanted stands called *naname* stands.⁶ In between these two groups of drums were two sets of multiple taiko and one table with an *atarigane* set upon it, to be played with drumsticks. The back riser contained an *ō-daiko*, a *fue* player (who rarely played during the piece, adding accents rather than a true melody), and two additional ensemble members with cylindrical shakers. “Tatsumaki,” described in the concert program as “a fast-paced, driving piece,” functioned as a powerful finale to the opening set of the concert, featuring fast rhythms, solos by the front line of drummers in which they hit the drums on both sides of them, and acrobatic choreography, such as a segment towards the end of the piece where eight players face each other while playing the front set of drums and constantly switching positions. After the final note was hit, the crowd roared with applause, the members of the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble took a bow, and the curtain dropped so that the stage could be quickly cleared in preparation for the next group on the concert.

In the span of just 30 minutes, the Taiko Jam audience witnessed a program that covered the full spectrum of *wadaiko* music: jazz-inspired melodic pieces, quiet works exploring the sonic qualities of a drum, traditional Japanese drum and flute music used to accompany a dance, and acrobatic pieces involving many taiko. Since the emergence of *wadaiko* in the 1950s, the genre has been characterized by the interplay between original compositions and works taken from the repertoire of Japanese theatrical and regional festival music, all brought together in a

⁶ “Naname” means a tilt, slant, or incline.

contemporary musical genre meant for the stage. The repertoire performed by artists has gotten increasingly diverse, not just in terms of musical content but also in regards to the influences brought into the art form.

At the same time, even though the Taiko Jam was advertised as presenting “taiko groups representing the full dynamic range of North America,” the concert had a broader geographic scope. The Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble as organized for the Taiko Jam included several performers from Japan.⁷ Similarly, the next group on the concert, Soh Daiko from New York, featured a vocal performance by Fujimoto Yoko, a member of the Japanese group Kodo. This geographic variety also reflects an essential element of *wadaiko*. While *wadaiko* was originally developed in Japan, early musical influences came from the United States, and by the late 1960s the genre was being performed across the Pacific Ocean as well. *Wadaiko* as it exists today is the result of the intercultural interactions between groups in Japan and the United States.

The 2011 Taiko Jam – and in particular, the set by the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble – was in many ways a reflection of the past, present, and future of *wadaiko* performance. *Wadaiko* has evolved dramatically over the course of its history, with each new generation of performers bringing different perspectives and influences both musical and visual. The genre has grown out of a large ensemble-dominated form of presentation to encapsulate a wide variety of modes of presentation, from small ensembles to soloists. Meanwhile, *wadaiko*’s musical evolution has been influenced by the way in which it has grown interculturally, as it spread out from Japan to also become popular in the United States. Further, the creation of repertoire has also been affected by the manner in which performers articulate about their music. In order to understand

⁷ The aforementioned Mochizuki Saburo and Suzuki Kyosuke, as well as performer Kageyama Isaku, who played on “Jugoya” and “Noon Cycles”

the current state of *wadaiko* music, when it has come from, and the direction in which it is moving, the history of the musical genre, its intercultural growth, and musicians' verbal representations of what they perform must all be considered.

1.1 RESEARCH AIMS

With this dissertation, I aim to develop a methodology for the construction for a history of music that has little or no written notation and has been transmitted mainly by aural/oral means. This methodology is feasible mainly because of technological advances in musical recording and reproduction, as well as communication technologies like the internet. It relies on the interpretation of primary source material such as audio-visual records of performance along with print materials such as program notes, interviews, and assorted Internet resources. Further, it also utilizes the researcher's own experiences and insight as a student and performer of the music.⁸

This dissertation is a musical history of *wadaiko*, a genre that emerged in the mid-1950s featuring Japanese taiko drums as the main instruments. Through an examination of prominent artists and works that I have determined to have had a lasting impact on the evolution of *wadaiko* musical style, I aim to reveal how the art form emerged out of festival drumming traditions, embracing a wide range of musical and visual influences even as it spread interculturally from

⁸ As such, this study is within the realm of ethnomusicology rather than historical musicology, not only because I examine music that originated in Japan, but also because of the ethnographic approach I take to the subject.

Japan to the United States. I identify individual compositions that I deem to be important to the growth of the genre, analyzing specific elements – including forms, rhythms, and instruments – used during the compositional process. At the same time, I focus upon specific performance practices – that is, techniques used to play the instruments – that have emerged as new works have been created while also examining the manner in which this has influenced the development of new types of *wadaiko* music. Further, I demonstrate how generational shifts and inter-genre borrowings have affected the evolution of *wadaiko* musical style.

My second aim in this dissertation is to demonstrate how a musical genre develops in an intercultural environment. I examine the manner in which intercultural relationships and musical influences have shaped the creation of repertoire by *wadaiko* artists, while also highlighting what particular groups and individuals have done to foster ties between Japan and the United States is highlighted and how this process is reflected in their music. Further, I demonstrate how these relationships have changed over time and the impact this change has had on the continued evolution of *wadaiko* repertoire.

The third aim I have with this dissertation is to explore the relationship between musical performance and the verbal representation of such performance by the musician, as well as how each – the performances and their verbal representations – influences the other. I highlight reoccurring themes like ‘tradition,’ demonstrating how the approach to this concept has changed within the *wadaiko* world over time, while at the same time problematizing the idea of tradition in a contemporary musical genre like *wadaiko*. Further, I reveal how issues of performance rights and lineage are directly tied to these discourses of tradition. Additionally, I examine how the two languages in verbal representation – Japanese and English – complicate the discourses of

tradition, performance rights, and lineage, and how the transmission of *wadaiko* knowledge is tied into this negotiation of language.

1.2 THEORETICAL ISSUES IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A WADAIKO HISTORY

1.2.1 Ethnomusicology & History

With the historical leaning I take in this dissertation, this study could be considered as being within the subfield of “historical ethnomusicology.” The term “historical ethnomusicology” was made popular by Kay Kaufman Shelemay, who uses it to describe a methodology that employs “the insights gained through studies of living musical cultures to better understand their pasts” (Shelemay 1980, 233). It is in many ways a response to a propensity noted by Bruno Nettl that “the approaches of ethnomusicologists to history, largely because of the lack of data but also because of the nomothetical tendencies of the social sciences, concern the processes of change more than the content of change” (Nettl 2005, 273-74). Shelemay used the term “historical ethnomusicology” as a means to demonstrate how “an ethnomusicological study can move beyond corroboration of established historical theory and provide the basis for new and alternative explanations” of historical processes – using ethnomusicological data from the present to describe the past (Shelemay 1980, 234). As noted by Ruth Stone, “historical treatments provide an expanded context in which to understand present-day performance” (Stone 2008, 186). To this end, as Richard Widdess notes in his overview of the subfield, a large percentage of such projects place an emphasis on “philology and on literary and textual

criticism,” influenced by historical musicology as well as the Western tradition of classical scholarship (Widdess 1992, 221).

Widdess describes the objectives of historical ethnomusicology as “the uncovering of historical events, and the study of their relationships in terms of processes of change, taking into account all available evidence, including that of socio-musical continuing and change observable today” (Widdess 1992, 220). He lists four activities that rest at the core of historical ethnomusicological research: “bibliography research, interpretation of the notation, transcription and analysis” (Widdess 1992, 222). As such, historical ethnomusicology offers not only a theoretical framework from which to construct a history, but also a methodology to use during this construction process.

Of course, the inclusion of “history” within an ethnomusicological study is not limited to those works that fall under the umbrella of historical ethnomusicology. In the introduction to a 1977 collection of his writings, a musing of different orientations within musicology at the time, Seeger proposes:

a theoretical basis for systematic musicology in terms of which improved relationships may be established (1) between musical and nonmusical or extramusical viewpoints, (2) between historical and systematic orientations, and (3) between scientific and critical methods. (Seeger 1977, 5-6)⁹

⁹ Seeger uses the term “systematic musicology” to contrast with historical musicology (also as an alternative to “ethnomusicology,” which of course is a term that hadn’t become part of the general lexicon until the latter half of the 20th Century).

Presently, “systematic musicology” is used to refer to:

Seeger seeks to study how music changes, rather than how music once was. This approach is based on an examination of “the broad and deep understanding between synchrony and diachrony, historiography and history, historiography and system-building achieved by linguistics” (Seeger 1977, 2). To this end, he looks to represent structures, events, and states of affairs “upon a line representing the unfoldment of a diachronic process” (Seeger 1977, 3). Drawing upon historiography, he notes that the idea of “what was” must be considered as “a succession of states of affairs – structures, if you will – whose lineage was so multifarious and so subject to continual change that the processes of linkage and change must be conceded to have continued to the present and be continuing into the future” (Seeger 1977, 3).

Seeger is not the only scholar to take such a diachronic approach to history; in his 1987 proposal for a remodeling of ethnomusicology, Timothy Rice notes that “historical construction can also be interpreted as the diachronic, ‘out-of-time’ study of musical change or the history of music” (Rice 1987, 475). Further, he writes “descriptively accurate and therefore useful to have a model of our field that reflects the central importance of change, of historical processes,” noting that history is “a primary issue, a fundamental process, a given of music making” (Rice 1987, 475). The history of *wadaiko* musical style as laid out in this dissertation follows this line of thinking, noting that events in the past continue to have an effect on the creation of repertoire today. While, as demonstrated in the following chapters, there has been a movement towards

“...a subdiscipline of musicology that is primarily concerned with music *in general*: what is music, what is it for, and why do we engage with it. By contrast, the sister disciplines of historical musicology and ethnomusicology are primarily concerned with *specific* manifestations of music: styles, genres, periods, traditions, and individual pieces or musical events.” Richard Parncutt, "Systematic Musicology and the History and Future of Western Musical Scholarship," *Journal of Interdisciplinary Music Studies* 1(2007): 3., italics in the original

increasingly complex compositions that utilize a wider range of variations in terms of rhythms, compositional practices, and instrumentation, one compositional style has not replaced another; rather, they coexist within the greater repertoire of *wadaiko* groups.

At the same time, I recognize that the approach towards a history of *wadaiko* in this dissertation – focusing on a few artists and compositions – also follows a model of the history of Western art music as constructed within historical musicology, in which history is defined by the outstanding individuals and compositions. Even as this risks the canonization process that has often been lamented by scholars in recent decades, I argue that it is necessary for an understanding of the manner in which *wadaiko* and *wadaiko* music has developed; indeed, as Kärjä notes, there is an “inevitable link between historiography and partaking in canon formation” (Kärjä 2006, 6). With my focus on individual compositions, I offer that there are in fact artists and piece that have pushed *wadaiko* forward from an artistic perspective, moving beyond the festival drum-based performance styles that dominated the genre at the beginning of its history. Indeed, it is this examination of artistic development that rests at the center of this dissertation.

1.2.2 Intercultural Music

This dissertation is an intercultural history of *wadaiko*, focusing upon activities in Japan and the United States, examining interactions between artists in both countries and how these interactions influenced the development of repertoire and musical style. In using the term ‘intercultural’ in this dissertation, I draw from the writings of Mark Slobin – in particular, his 1993 book *Subcultural Sounds: Micromusics of the West* and an article containing similar material that preceded it in 1992 (Slobin 1992, 1993). Slobin writes about what he calls

“micromusics,” defined as “the small units within big music cultures;” in writings by other scholars, these might be called “styles” or “genres,” terms that I myself use over the course of this dissertation (Slobin 1993, 11). He offers three types of “culture” within which these micromusics operate: “subculture, superculture, and interculture” (Slobin 1993, 11). Of course, even as he offers these categories Slobin recognizes that these are only “temporary supports for a theory and method of current musical life that rests on a notion of overlaps, intersections, and nestings of the sort super-, sub-, and inter- represent” (Slobin 1993, 11-12). Nevertheless, these categories offer one perspective from which *wadaiko* performance can be understood.

“Superculture,” with its emphasis on hegemony, is not particularly applicable to this history of *wadaiko* music, partially as *wadaiko* groups are only a minor player in the industrial and state power relationships that Slobin sees as the main elements of this category. However, understandings of “subculture” and “interculture” can help shed light on the development of *wadaiko* in Japan and the United States. Slobin’s concept of subculture is tied to “three overlapping spheres of cultural activity: ‘choice,’ affinity,’ and ‘belonging’” (Slobin 1993, 55). This is immediately tied to a sense of self, of identity, in relation to various groups or organizations; as such, subculture is immediately relevant to the growth of *wadaiko* in the United States, with its ties to Japanese-American communities and the Asian-American Movement in the 1960s and 1970s (see Chapter 5 for more on this subject).

Interculture, meanwhile, refers to a realm of “musical forces that cross frontiers” (Slobin 1993, 61). In other words, it deals with activities that move beyond the borders of nation-states; as such, it is immediately relevant to this dissertation, as I demonstrate how *wadaiko* has developed due to musical interaction between artists in Japan and the United States, not as two separate spheres of activity but through constant communication and exchange. Just as he offers

three categories of micromusics, Slobin also offers three types of intercultural: industrial, diasporic, and affinity. “Industrial intercultural” is described as “the creature of the commodified music system,” built upon the continued negotiation between the consumer and the state; just like superculture, this category has only limited relevance to the examination *wadaiko* performance in this dissertation (Slobin 1993, 61). However, the other two categories are more immediately applicable to *wadaiko* and this study.

Slobin’s idea of “Diasporic intercultural” is particularly relevant to *wadaiko* performance. He describes diasporic intercultural as having emerged from “the linkages that subcultures set up across national boundaries” (Slobin 1993, 64). Certainly, as shall be discussed in this dissertation, the spread of *wadaiko* from Japan to the United States was immediately connected to diasporic communities, as *wadaiko* groups first arose in the last three remaining Japantowns in California. Similarly, Slobin characterizes diasporic intercultural as primarily involving oral transmission. The transmission of *wadaiko* knowledge between Japan and the United States has occurred primarily in oral form, as teachers pass on their information to students, who subsequently share it with others. As such, *wadaiko* fits well within the model of diasporic intercultural.

The third sub-category of intercultural offered by Slobin is “affinity intercultural,” described as emerging from a situation in which “music seems to call out to audiences across nation-state lines even when they are not part of a heritage or a commodified, disembodied network, and particularly when the transmission is of the old-fashioned variety – face to face, mouth to ear” (Slobin 1993, 68). This sub-category offers a means of understanding the spread of *wadaiko* beyond Japanese-American (and subsequently Asian-American) communities, becoming a musical genre performed by peoples of all backgrounds. While not immediately

relevant to this dissertation, as the artists discussed in later chapters fall largely within the realm of diasporic interculture, it offers one perspective from which to view the embracing of *wadaiko* in the United States beyond ethnic boundaries.

Even as Slobin sets up these three categories of micromusics, he acknowledges that there are many types of interactions that blur the lines of super-, sub-, and inter- cultures. One that is relevant to *wadaiko* performance is the intersection of local/interculture, in which diasporic groups hear the music that “their colleagues and competitors back home are playing” (Solbin 1993, 79). Certainly this can be found in *wadaiko*, as American groups are impacted by the activities of their colleagues in Japan. However, I also offer a reverse situation, with the activities of diasporic groups impacting the music-making of Japanese artists. As shall be discussed in later chapters, the spread of *wadaiko* to the United States impacted the activities of Japanese groups (particularly Ondekoza and Kodo, as discussed in Chapter 4). These local/interculture intersections, then, are a two-way process, further strengthening intercultural ties.

In *Subcultural Sounds: Micromusics of the West*, Slobin is more concerned with subcultures, even as the first half of the study is devoted to defining the three categories of micromusics. With this dissertation, I look to contribute to Slobin’s model by demonstrating how a musical genre develops on an intercultural level, existing not just in Japan or the United States but indeed within a space that embraces the activities of artists in both countries and is reliant on interactions between the two.

While I point to Slobin as offering a model of understanding intercultural music, I also recognize that he is not the only scholar to use this term. Indeed, he himself does not assume that he is the first, rather acknowledging that by the time he published his book in 1993 “intercultural” had already made its way into the lexicon of other writers. For example, the term

appears in the title of the organization The Centre for Intercultural Music Arts, founded in 1990 by ethnomusicology Akin Euba and later succeeded by The Centre for Intercultural Musicology at Churchill College (UK).¹⁰ These centers were founded in recognition that “composers around the world (especially those from non-Western countries) are producing music in which resources derived from traditional and folk music... are combined with Western techniques of composition.”¹¹ Through a series of symposia and festivals, these centers have looked to forward the cause of “intercultural musicology,” combining elements of ethnomusicology and historical musicology.

The idea of intercultural music and intercultural musicology offered by these centers are immediately applicable to this dissertation. As shall be revealed in the following chapters, the development of *wadaiko* music is the result of combining “traditional and folk music” with “Western techniques of composition.” Further, it could be argued that my approach within this study is a combination of ethnomusicology and historical musicology, combining musical analysis and history-building with the examination of non-Western musics and discourses used by artists, just as historical ethnomusicology falls within the realms. As such, the use of the term “intercultural” within this dissertation is recognition of not just Slobin’s writings, but also of other scholars that seek to examine transnational and cross-cultural musical performance.

¹⁰ <http://cimacc.wordpress.com/> (accessed April 12, 2013)

¹¹ <http://cimacc.wordpress.com/> (accessed April 12, 2013)

1.2.3 Defining ‘*Wadaiko*’

My building of an intercultural history of *wadaiko* and *wadaiko* music is complicated by the fact that I must deal with two languages: Japanese and English. The verbal representation of musical performance is influenced by the common trends in one’s native language. This not only impacts the sources I consulted during my research, in that I have often translated Japanese-language resources for quotation, but has also had a more immediate influence on the terminology I use to describe the subject under study, a modern musical genre that utilizes Japanese taiko as the main instruments. Indeed, though I have chosen to use the term *wadaiko* in this dissertation – for reasons that will be explained below – others have chosen different terms by which to call this genre, a process that is largely divided according to language.

A 1985 article by Susan Asai, the first in English to examine *wadaiko* performance, discusses what she calls “the hybrid musical phenomenon of Buddhist taiko drumming” (Asai 1985, 166). The term “taiko drumming” has been used by a number of other scholars since this time, echoing the terminology embraced by many performers in the United States, who describe the art form as “taiko” and their ensembles as “taiko groups.” Paul Yoon’s 2001 article about Asian American identity as negotiated by members of Soh Daiko in New York, for example, is subtitled “Taiko Drumming and Asian American Identifications” (Yoon 2001). Meanwhile, Shawn Bender regularly uses the term in his writings about the rise of the art form in Japan, including his 2003 dissertation with the subtitle “Taiko and Neo-Folk Performance in Contemporary Japan,” and more recently his 2012 book *Taiko Boom* (the first academic book to deal with musical genre) (Bender 2003, 2012). In these occasions, the word “taiko” or term “taiko drumming” is meant to signify a musical genre in which Japanese drums are used.

However, the usage of the term “taiko” to refer to the musical genre becomes problematic when considering Japanese-language texts. In Japanese, the word “taiko” generally refers to the instrument, a particular type of drum that was developed in Japan over the centuries; it literally means “fat drum” in Japanese.¹² While it can be used to refer to a variety of drum types; while it is used for both native Japanese and non-Japanese drums, it is typically used for Japanese drums. Additionally, it should be noted that ‘taiko’ is both singular and plural, as are the names for specific drums (like *ō-daiko*). Further, there are specific names for types of drums – for example, *o-daiko* and *ko-tsuzumi* – that will be used when referring to a particular instrument.¹³ The word “taiko” is also used as a root word for names for specific drum types, such as *shime-daiko*, *da-daiko*, and *ō-daiko*.¹⁴ This is the usage I have followed in this dissertation – “taiko” for the drum rather than the musical genre. An alternative phrasing that recognizes this incongruity between the instrument and the musical genre that is sometimes used in English-language materials is “taiko drum.” However, due to the repetitive nature of this phrase – if translated, it would become “drum drum” – I intentionally avoid this phrase.

Apart from “taiko,” several other terms that refer to this musical genre that features taiko as the main instrument have been introduced in both Japanese and English language texts. One such word that is commonly found is *kumidaiko*, which means “group drum.” The origins of this

¹² The term “Nihon no taiko” is also sometimes used, which means “Japanese drum.”

¹³ *Ko-tsuzumi* is a slightly different type of drum from the others mentioned in this paragraph, one used primarily for classical music. The character for *tsuzumi* in this word is the second character in *taiko*, “ko,” with “ko” being an alternative reading used when combined with other Chinese characters.

¹⁴ The romanized ‘t’ often becomes a ‘d’ in the Japanese language when two words are put together to form a new word; hence, ‘daiko’ instead of ‘taiko.’

word are a little vague, although Chie Otsuka – who wrote one of the first theses on the art form with her 1997 study entitled “Learning Taiko in America” – was able to provide some insight during a discussion of the word in the Taiko Community discussion group on the website Facebook. She stated:

As far as I understand, the term Kumidaiko was a created word by Prof. Masahiro Nishitsunoi who organized [an] annual taiko concert series at [the] National Theater of Japan from [the] 1970s. He categorized style[s] of Japanese drumming in several categories and “Kumidaiko” was one of them.¹⁵

The term *kumidaiko* continues to be used in both countries today, owing to Nishitsunoi’s influence. An introduction to types of Japanese drums published by the Asano Taiko drum manufacturer includes many instances of the word, including one in a historical chart of “Taiko trends” (“*taiko no dōkō*”). The entry for Showa 26 (1951) states: “Oguchi Daihachi forms ‘Osuwa Daiko’ and devises the *kumidaiko* performance style” (Asano Foundation for Taiko Culture Research 2002, 40).¹⁶ Meanwhile, “*kumidaiko*” has become part of the common parlance of some American performers. It is used in program notes and explanations given performances, and is used by artists during events such as discussion panels at the North American Taiko Conference and the East Coast Taiko Conference. Shoji Kameda, former member of the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble and current member of the group On Ensemble, pointed out in the same Facebook discussion as quoted above that Nishitsunoi gave a keynote presentation at the first North American Taiko Conference. Looking in retrospect, Kameda noted that “it seems very

¹⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/taiko/permalink/143290185722657/> (accessed December 17, 2012)

¹⁶ Of course, as shall be discussed in the following chapter, this date isn’t necessarily correct.

likely that the widespread use of the term “kumidaiko”... can be traced back to Nishitsunoi sensei's involvement at the first North American Taiko Conference.”¹⁷

However, Nishitsunoi did not necessarily stick with that label in his own writings. He does mention the term in a book chapter about the classification of Japanese drums and drumming styles, stating that “the manner of playing in which you bring together many taiko of different types, rather than just playing one drum” could be called ‘*kumidaiko*’” (Nishitsunoi 1990, 118). However, in the same publication and other writings he began primarily using the term “*fuku-shiki*” (“complex form”) for this performance style in which “a large number of different taiko are used” (Nishitsunoi 1990, 349). Nishitsunoi is not the only one to use this term, as it can also found in a performance practice manual published by the Nippon Taiko Foundation (as can a reproduction of the classification chart developed by Nishitsunoi) (Nippon Taiko Foundation 2006).

Further, Nishitsunoi's use of “*kumidaiko*” in relation to the contemporary musical genre discussed in this dissertation is complicated by the fact that he groups together older regional styles, such as *Chichibu Yatai-Bayashi* from Chichibu, Saitama Prefecture, with newer performance ensembles such as Sukeroku Taiko of Tokyo, a grouping that is problematic when repertoire is examined.¹⁸ As I shall demonstrate in the following chapters, even if *wadaiko* pieces utilize elements taken from regional festival drumming, *wadaiko* groups separate themselves from their festival forbearers through an emphasis upon taiko as the primary instruments. Further, Nishitsunoi used the term largely to refer to large ensembles, a classification system

¹⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/taiko/permalink/143290185722657/> (accessed December 17, 2012)

¹⁸ *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* is discussed in Chapter 4, while the group Sukeroku Taiko is the main subject of Chapter 3.

which breaks down when the activities of soloists are considered. As such, I have chosen to not use “*kumidaiko*” to describe the musical genre at the center of this dissertation.

Another word that can be found within this complex web of terminology, and the one I have chosen to use in this dissertation, is *wadaiko*. This compound word uses the Chinese character *wa*, often used within the Japanese language in connection to something that is native Japanese in style – for example, *washitsu*, a Japanese-style room featuring straw *tatami* mats and a particular construction and layout, as compared to a Western-style room that may have carpeting or hardwood floors and Western-style furniture.¹⁹ It is a term often used by Japanese groups in the naming of their ensemble: *Wadaiko* Group ____ or *Wadaiko* Ensemble _____. The term is used within Japanese-language scholastic literature as well; Asano Akitoshi used it in his 1995 interview with Osuwa Daiko founding member Oguchi Daihachi for the journal *Taikology* entitled “Asking Oguchi Daihachi: The Dawn of *Wadaiko* Music” (“*Oguchi Daihachi ni Kiku Wadaiko Ongaku no Reimeiki*”), as did Otsuka Chie in her 1998 *Taikology* article “The Development of *Wadaiko* in North America” (“*Beikoku ni Okeru Wadaiko no Hatten*”) (Oguchi 1995; Otsuka 1998). Further, the term appears in several Japanese-language books about the genre (Asano Foundation for Taiko Culture Research 2002; Hanai 2001, 2001; Kono 2001; Sendo 2007; Taiko Center 1992; Tamura 2001).

Admittedly, this term has not been used as often within English language discourse, save for a few groups in English-speaking countries that have named themselves in a similar manner to Japanese groups who use the term (and an 2006 book chapter by Hugh de Ferranti, in which he also uses the term “taiko” – see de Ferranti 2006), owing to the popularity of “*kumidaiko*” and “taiko” to refer to the musical genre; certainly, it has not been used within English-language

¹⁹ If we break the word “*washitsu*” down, it could be written “*wa-shitsu*,” with “*shitsu*” meaning “room.”

scholastic literature. However, my use of *wadaiko* is a direct reaction to the limitations of the other terms as discussed above. Nishitsunoi coined the term *kumidaiko* to refer to a particular style of performance: a large ensemble format involving many drums. Osuwa Daiko was the prime influence and the primary group referenced in Nishitsunoi's categorization chart. However, I argue that it cannot be applied to solo performers and small ensembles, owing to both different types of compositions (indicated by instrument, among other items). At the same time, it is difficult to place some of the pieces performed by groups like Kodo – more contemporary pieces that use compositional techniques derived from Western classical music, like aleatoric music, as well as pieces that draw heavily from regional drumming traditions and indeed are presentations of these traditions with only limited alternations – in the large ensemble format to which *kumidaiko* normally applies. Indeed, *Wadaiko* music is often performed in concert alongside the older festival performance traditions, as shown in The Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble's Taiko Jam set discussed at the beginning of this chapter.²⁰ Further, as has already been described, the word “taiko” is problematic when considering its usage in multiple languages.

Due to the limitations of “taiko” and “*kumidaiko*,” I have chosen to use the term *wadaiko*, which I define as a musical genre in which taiko – Japanese drums – are the primary instruments used by artists. *Kumidaiko*, then, could be used to refer to a style of performance within the larger genre focusing upon large ensembles.

“*Wadaiko*” is admittedly a term not commonly used in English, but I believe it best represents the wide variety of compositions performed by artists today while avoiding potential

²⁰ Of course, this process varies according to the artist and their approach to *wadaiko* performance, as shall be discussed over the course of this dissertation.

complications that arise when taking an intercultural look at the art form. Utilizing this broad definition, the wide variety of *wadaiko* repertoire can be organized into a single musical genre, from compositions based on festival music to works that borrow more from Western musical styles, from large ensembles to soloists. By grouping all these various works under a single banner, I recognize that they have as a common point the use of taiko as the primary instrument, which separates them from other forms of musical presentation. Further, my use of the term is an intention separation from past writings about *wadaiko*, which as I discuss in the Literature Review below have had a rather limited scope. In embracing the term *wadaiko*, I look to offer a wider view that in turn will broaden the scope of scholastic writings about the musical genre.

1.2.4 Tradition

One of the prominent themes of discussion in relation to *wadaiko* performance is the idea of tradition; indeed, it is often through the mediation of differing approaches to this concept that the art form has evolved. Of course, the idea of tradition itself is not without its inherent problems, something that has been acknowledged by scholars. Hesselink observes that tradition was for a time spoken of “in terms of a dichotomy: tradition as old and preservationist versus innovation and modernity” (Hesselink 2004, 406). It is this dichotomy that is occasionally evoked during discussions about *wadaiko* performance. For example, during a discussion panel at the 2013 East Coast Taiko Conference, participants were asked to share their thoughts on “tradition and innovation,” the question phrased in a manner that suggested that the terms were thought of as separate entities.

However, the nature of tradition is much more complicated. Anthropologists Richard Handler and Jocelyn Linnekin characterize the creation of tradition as “a process of

interpretation, attributing meaning in the present though making reference to the past” (Handler and Linnekin 1984, 287). This is similar to an approach taken by folklorist Henry Glassie, who describes tradition as the means for “deriving the future from the past,” defining it as a “volitional, temporal action” (Glassie 1995, 409). A key element to these conceptions is a degree of agency, recognizing active participation in the creation of tradition. Tradition is not a static object, but something that is always evolving.

At the same time, a crucial element for many scholars in their perceptions of tradition is a connection to what has come before. Glassie writes that tradition is “inherently tangled with the past, the future, with history” (Glassie 1995, 399). This relationship between the past, the present, and the future is particularly important when examining formations of tradition in *wadaiko* and other East Asian performance arts. As Robert Provine notes in his study of history in relation to musical performance in China, Korea, and Japan, “both elite professional arts and so-called ‘folk’ arts are felt to express the extended legacy and modern awareness of history” (Provine 2007). At the same time, even though a key element of tradition as it is conceptualized in East Asia is a connection to the past, this does not preclude the presence of creativity and innovation within a performance art; in other words, performance practices in the modern era are not necessarily exactly as they were centuries before. Indeed, innovation is often considered to be an essential part of the continuation of a tradition. Creighton declares that the act of learning elements of a performance tradition in Japan “implies the possibility of doing something different from now into the future”; further, “it embraces the creative and generative possibilities of tradition, and proclaims tradition to be alive and have the capacity to incorporate change and innovation” (Creighton 2007, 223). Such was the intent of Chinese performer Fang Kun when

setting forth his views on of traditional music in the early 1980s: “traditional music has developed, it has great vitality, it is not static” (Fang, et al. 1981, 6).

However, tradition may be evoked for purposes non-musical. In his 1983 essay “The Invention of Tradition,” Hobsbawm reveals how discourses of tradition are routinely used for social and political purposes, nationalistic and otherwise (Hobsbawm 1983). He demonstrates how “‘traditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented,” and how they become tied to ritual complexes used by institutions to establish, legitimize, or reassert power (Hobsbawm 1983, 1). The recognition of what Hobsbawm calls “a process of formalization and ritualization” within the establishment of invented traditions provides one perspective that could be used for the evaluation of processes that inform individuals’ conceptions of tradition and innovation within *wadaiko* (Hobsbawm 1983, 4).

Anthropologist Shawn Bender makes use of Hobsbawm’s theoretical framework in his writings on the growth of *wadaiko* in Japan. Bender frames the evolution of *wadaiko* performance within larger discourses of invented tradition, demonstrating how the genre has been used by various groups in Japan for different nationalistic and artistic purposes (Bender 2012). He coins the phrase “neo-folk” for this type of performance that rests between traditional folk drumming styles and modern performance traditions meant for the stage (later modifying the term to “new folk performing arts” in his 2012 book *Taiko Boom*), exploring the manner in which *wadaiko* has been used “within the context of local festivity and in the search for new forms of communality” and functions “within a social space previously occupied by older, orally transmitted folk performing arts” (Bender 2012, 12). Indeed, Bender demonstrates how *wadaiko* has been used for the purposes of local festival creation and nationalism.

Another factor that must be taken into considered within the examination of how tradition is evoked by performers is the connection of *wadaiko* to discourses of nostalgia, particularly in Japan. Millie Creighton has highlighted the manner in which the genre has been used to “assuage fears of a shifting Japanese identity” through the proclamation of it as part of an “underlying Japanese cultural identity” (Creighton 2008, 44). Bender, in turn, ties this process to the growth of amateur *wadaiko* groups across Japan, due in part to “increased funding for community revitalization and festival creation” (Bender 2012, 111). In response to emigration from rural areas into cities like Tokyo, *wadaiko* has become a tool for a revitalization of local community arts. Such was the original goal of Ondekoza, which originally was to be a “group of young people based on Sado Island and dedicated to restoring the spirits and self-confidence of its young people by ‘revitalizing traditional arts’” (Bender 2012, 66).²¹ The evocation of *wadaiko* as a traditional art form, then, can be connected to larger social issues, separate from the actual musical content (and, to some extent, making Hobsbawm’s point about invented traditions even more poignant). All these elements come into play when the term “tradition” is evoked in connection to *wadaiko* performance. During the construction of a musical history of *wadaiko* performance in Japan and the United States, I will highlight the various ways in which the term is used and how it is negotiated, while also demonstrating how this process has changed over the history of *wadaiko* performance and affected the creation of repertoire.

It is worth noting here the linguistic barrier present in an examination of discourses of tradition within *wadaiko* performance. While the term in English is simply “tradition,” there is a broader range of terms in the Japanese language that highlight the way in which the concept is conceptualized in East Asia. One word is *denshō*, which has the implications of transmission;

²¹ For more about this, see Chapter 4.

when the word is used in verb form (*denshō suru*), it means to pass something on. The verb usage of this word highlights the manner in which tradition is considered as a process rather than a static object. Another word is *dentō*, which while generally translated as “tradition” can also mean a convention; this is closer to the normal use of “tradition” in English, used as a noun. When relevant in the following chapters of this dissertation, specific terms in Japanese related to this discourse of tradition will be highlighted, as will their implications for a broader understanding of the process as present within *wadaiko* performance.

1.2.4.1 Lineage

The idea of history as a strong factor in the conceptualization of tradition in East Asia is influenced to a degree by the importance of lineage systems within the performing arts, as these systems often help to guide individuals’ perceptions of the history of an art form. Indeed, the lineages of performers can have a strong impact of how they perceive the idea of tradition, perpetuating certain attitudes or intentionally choosing to embrace a different outlook. In Japan, the idea of lineage is often tied to the *iemoto* system of transmission (“*iemoto*” literally meaning “base of the family”).²² A family-like hierarchical system that guides the transmission of traditional arts in Japan, the *iemoto* system not only includes the teacher-student relationship but also has connections to repertoire and performance practice. An understanding of this system not only is crucial to the understanding of transmission of artistic knowledge in Japan, but also has broader implications as well for an understanding of Japanese society, for as Francis Hsu

²² The term is often used to referred to a single group operating within this system – as in, “an *iemoto*” or “the *iemoto*.”

demonstrates the construction of an *iemoto* is reflective of personal relationships and hierarchical positioning (Hsu 1975).

An *iemoto* features a single individual at the head of a hierarchical structure, tasked with encouraging “the accurate preservation” of an art (Reed and Locke 1983, 21). In their examination of a *koto iemoto* group (which, in addition to being called an *iemoto*, may sometimes called *shachū*, which means “troupe” or “company”), Reed and Locke outline several functions inherent in an individual’s position at the top of the *iemoto* system:

... 1) maintaining a high artistic standard, 2) licensing teachers, 3) granting formal membership into the shachu, 4) conferring professional performing names on members and 5) awarding certificates of accomplishment. (Reed and Locke 1983, 21)

As demonstrated by P.G. O’Neill and Christine Yano in their studies of how the system operated in the theatrical arts – primarily, kabuki and Noh – the *iemoto* system has influenced a large part of the cultural life of Japan (O’Neill 1984; Yano 1993). Yano writes that “knowing a particular piece places a student within the *iemoto* hierarchy;” similarly, each *iemoto* tends to have signature pieces that remain within the system (Yano 1993, 80). This can influence how individuals view the importance of pieces as well as history on a broader scale, for as Kärjä writes, “canonization or canon formation is dependent on writing history (or reproducing it in one form or another) and that it very often centers on a group of people whose abilities are praised endlessly” (Kärjä 2006, 5). This hearkens back to Hobsbawm conception of an “invented tradition,” in that a certain history is created within the system.

Even as the *iemoto* system is deeply tied to older performance arts in Japan, however, there is a danger in tying it too closely to *wadaiko* performance. Even if there are certain

dominant *wadaiko* performance styles that emerged, as will be discussed in this dissertation, none of these performance styles have implemented the *natori* professional performance name system that helps to define an *iemoto*. And yet, as will be discussed in Chapter 8 there have been efforts by certain individuals to institute an *iemoto*-like system, to varying success. Nevertheless, the idea of lineage systems – that is, a connection from teacher to student, even if not within a formalized *iemoto* setting – is relevant to the history of *wadaiko*, for as revealed in the following chapters artists often maintain a deep connection with their teachers, both in terms of performance practices and repertoire.

At the same time, there is a broader confluence of lineage and *iemoto* within *wadaiko*. As Hugh de Ferranti writes, *wadaiko* “is a genre that came about through individuals reworking elements from localized historical traditions *of which they were not successors*” (de Ferranti 2006, 81, italics in the original). This is especially the case with Ondekoza and Kodo, discussed in Chapter 5, who incorporated various regional drumming styles into their own performances. As will be discussed, these individuals did study with performers from the native regions of these styles, but that is rarely the case for others – particularly those in the United States – that have adopted the resulting works as part of their own repertoire.

Meanwhile, the nature of lineage – as well as potential connections to *iemoto* – influences not only discourses of tradition in relation to *wadaiko*, but also the construction of history. Few performers of *wadaiko* have a direct connection to any of the *iemoto* systems present in Japanese theatrical or folk arts; that is, there are few *wadaiko* artists who have studied *hōgaku* or other similar arts that utilize the *iemoto* system from individuals who operate within that system. Those who do travel to Japan to study *wadaiko*, as well as with other related genres like festival and theatrical drumming, have one perspective on what can be considered traditional; in many

cases, it is these individuals that have become major forces in the development of *wadaiko* and have helped to make the art form more intercultural in nature. Conversely, those who know only about the history of *wadaiko* in a single country have a different perspective on the matter, made even more complicated when the knowledge of the genre in Japan versus the United States is considered (a matter of language and the transmission of knowledge). As such, this situation offers a multitude of histories that can be invoked during not only the creation of *wadaiko* music and performance practices, but also in the evolution of topics of discussion that influence the development of musical style.

1.3 RESEARCH METHDOLOGY AND SCOPE

Primary fieldwork for this project was carried from June 2011 to June 2012; during this time, I conducted interviews and site observations and attended concerts at multiple sites in the United States and Japan.²³ Primary centers of fieldwork activity included Honolulu, Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay area, New York, and Tokyo. This data have been supplemented by materials gathered during the summer of 2008 in Tokyo, June 2009 in Honolulu and Japan, and the summer of 2010 in Honolulu.

Beyond the observational data gathered during my fieldwork, I also draw upon my performance experience as a member of Pittsburgh Taiko from 2009 to the present, as a student

²³ A list of concerts and festivals attended can be found in Appendices C.1 and C.2. Ensembles visited during my fieldwork, meanwhile, are listed in Appendix C.5.

Additionally, names of interviewees, along with locations and dates of conducted interviews, can be found in Appendix C.6.

at the Taiko Center of the Pacific in Honolulu during the summers of 2010 and 2011, and as participant in numerous *wadaiko* workshops in the United States and Japan over the past several years.²⁴ This has been further enhanced by my involvement in the 2009 North American Taiko Conference in Los Angeles and the 2011 North American Taiko Conference at Stanford University (Stanford, California), as well as the 2012 Eastern Taiko Conference at Wesleyan University (Middleton, Connecticut) and the 2013 East Coast Taiko Conference at Brown University (Providence, Rhode Island).²⁵

I have complemented observational and participatory data gathered during my fieldwork with the study of both audio/video and print materials. Video performances have served as the primary source material for repertoire analyses and the creation of transcriptions; through the repeated study of performances, I was able to determine both performance practices and musical elements from not just aural cues but visual ones as well. For some compositions, a single performance has been used as a principal source, while in other cases multiple performances by one or more groups have been considered. In the case where a written score for a piece is available, I have consulted that resource, but due to the general rarity of such scores – and of written down *wadaiko* music in general – a large majority of the transcriptions found in this dissertation are of my own creation.

The extended use of transcriptions within this dissertation is worth further mentioning, as it is not something typically found in an academic study of *wadaiko* (a lacuna that I address further in the Literature Review below). However, given that this dissertation is an examination of musical style within the genre, the use of transcriptions is essential. Through the highlighting

²⁴ A list of these workshops can be found in Appendix C.3.

²⁵ See Chapter 8 for a discussion of these conferences.

of particularly rhythmic practices and compositional techniques, I reveal how *wadaiko* music has developed over time.

Beyond audio and video recordings, I have examined numerous print sources in both English and Japanese, including books, journal articles, concert programs, published interviews, and newspaper articles. Mainly biographical or autobiographical in nature, beyond providing historical data these materials have provided an insight into performers' verbal representations of their music and how this has changed over time.

I also conducted interviews with present and past members of groups mentioned in this dissertation, as well as performers with direct connections to these groups and artists. In cases where I was unable to conduct a direct interview, I have contacted artists via e-mail, and have greatly benefited from these conversations. Further, I have consulted with taiko performers and scholars during the writing of this document to verify facts and supplement interviews.

1.3.1 Scope

The geographic scope I have chosen for this dissertation – featuring performers from only a few cities in Japan and the United States – is a reflection of those groups that, through my analyses of a wide range of *wadaiko* performances, I have determined to be most influential in the intercultural development of *wadaiko* repertoire and musical style. Perhaps owing to the cultural and economic power found in cities like Tokyo and Los Angeles, these cities have become major centers of *wadaiko* performance, giving birth to a number of the groups and artists discussed in this study. Additionally, the groups and artists examined in this dissertation can all be classified as professional or semi-professional artists. The performers of *wadaiko* in Japan and the United States can be divided into three basic categories: professional, semi-professional, and

amateur. Professionals make their living from teaching and performing *wadaiko*, while semi-professionals – even though they may get paid for these activities – also have a non-*wadaiko* source of income; amateurs, meanwhile, get no financial benefits from performance.

While I do not look to diminish the contribution of amateur *wadaiko* groups to the overall growth of the art form in Japan and the United States, my focus on professional and semi-professional artists in this dissertation is the result of both the examination of *wadaiko* music performed by artists in Japan and United States and the consideration of which groups are most active on an intercultural scale. I have chosen the groups discussed in the following chapters according to my determination of the influence they have had on the development of *wadaiko* music, based on a broad survey of *wadaiko* activities in both Japan and the United States. At the same time, I must acknowledge that the sheer amount of amateur *wadaiko* groups – over 300 in the United States, and potentially in excess of 4000 in Japan – makes an all-encompassing study of the art form that includes these viewpoints quite difficult. Limiting the scope to professional and semi-pro groups brings this study into a more manageable realm.

Many other groups have been excluded from this dissertation based on a number of factors. Upon a broad survey of the activities of *wadaiko* groups, I have determined that many groups are similar to those discussed in this work in terms of repertoire and performance style – for example, their compositions are similar to a previous work to the extent that direct influence could be claimed.²⁶ Meanwhile, some groups may have been founded by members who left currently existing professional/semi-professional groups. In those instances, I have chosen to

²⁶ One such example would be the many *shime-daiko*-focused works that emerged after Ishii Maki demonstrate the viability of such an instrumentation scheme with “Monochrome,” or the *ō-daiko*-centric works that followed Ondekoza’s “O-daiko.” See Chapter 4.

look at the original ensembles (with the exception of Kodo, for reasons discussed in Chapter 4), as I believe they have had the greatest influence on the development of *wadaiko* music.

However, I acknowledge that this is simply one perspective on *wadaiko* history. As former San Francisco Taiko Dojo and Ondekoza member – and head of the Sacramento Taiko Don – Tiffany Tamaribuchi notes:

There are people in Japan... who would challenge (off the record) the accepted history based on the activities of different Sukeroku group members doing different things, and some things that other people were doing in different parts of Japan around the same time that Oguchi-Sensei was doing stuff in Nagano. He definitely had the strongest PR, though, and the most internationally wide-reaching scope.²⁷

Nevertheless, I delineate my choice of artists – which, of course, suggests “importance” or status – by focusing upon the development of *wadaiko* musical style as well as the intercultural nature of the genre.

Further, there is an additional delimitation within the course of these writings that must be acknowledged. I have decided to limit my study largely to *wadaiko* repertoire, building a history based on the development of musical style, the intercultural growth of the art form, and the impact of verbal representations of *wadaiko* performance. While not denying the influence of historical, social, economic, psychological, culture, political, and innumerable other factors and discourses on the development of *wadaiko*, to include a study of all these elements alongside a

²⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/taikocommunity/permalink/115459805225256/> (accessed December 6, 2012)

history of *wadaiko* music would create a document far too expansive for a dissertation (or perhaps even multiple dissertations).

1.3.1.1 Concerning Transcriptions

The transcriptions found within this dissertation are entirely musical in nature; that is, there are no representations of choreographic movement. While some past studies of *wadaiko* performance have included various forms of notation for choreographic movement (primarily, Kenny Endo's 1999 master's thesis), such notational forms only work where there is a predetermined choreography that is the same in each performance. With the exception of "Yodan Uchi" – discussed in Chapter 3, and the topic of Endo's aforementioned thesis – the works discussed in this dissertation do not contain music that link rhythms with movements beyond those necessary to produce a sound.²⁸ Given that this dissertation is a history of *wadaiko* musical style, the focus is upon the rhythms found within compositions.

Similarly, with the exception of "Irodori" (Chapter 4) and "Ancient Beginnings" (Chapter 6), transcriptions do not include melodic lines. This is due to a perceived difference between improvised and non-improvised parts in the musical examples chosen for this dissertation. Those other pieces discussed in the following chapters that do have some form of melodic element – "Yatai-bayashi" (Chapter 4), "Sokobayashi" (Chapter 5), "Yamasong" (Chapter 7) – contain largely improvisation elements; that is, the general melodic flow is not the same from

²⁸ This hints at a potential difference between choreographic movement and kinesthetic movement, an interesting topic that, while relevant to *wadaiko* performance, is outside the scope of this dissertation.

performance to performance. As such, it is not possible to create a transcription that reflects a piece as separated from any individual performance.²⁹

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

I have in this writing of this dissertation consulted sources that I divide into two categories: primary and secondary. Rather than indicating importance and value, this categorization scheme reflects the type of information available in the sources. A primary source is an original document, including recording of performances and concert programs, as well as interviews and articles that are primarily factual in nature. Meanwhile, a secondary source is analytical, interpreting and providing commentary on the data found within the primary sources.

1.4.1 Primary Sources

Primary sources consulted for this dissertation include books, journal and newspaper articles, published interviews, and concert programs, either written about or directly by the groups

²⁹ As such, the transcriptions of folk music in this dissertation are problematic, for as has been discussed by William Malm the boundary between improvisation, variation, and composition are often vaguely defined. William P. Malm, "Shoden: A Study in Tokyo Festival Music. When Is Variation an Improvisation?," *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council* 7(1975).

However, as the transcriptions of festival music found below are relevant for both characteristic rhythmic passages and organizational schemes, they are worth including in the discussions.

discussed in the following chapters.³⁰ For example, in the discussion of the groups Ondekoza and Kodo in Chapter 4, a number of books were consulted, including a 30th Anniversary retrospective published by Kodo in 2011 (Coutts-Smith 1997; Hoshino 1985; Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011; Ohta 1989). Meanwhile, Ondekoza founding member and current *wadaiko* soloist Hayashi Eitetsu published several books as well as been the subject of several long interviews covering his career (Hayashi 1992, 2011, 2012). Similarly, several former members of the group Ondekoza have published memoirs about their time with the group (Inoue 1996; Yuuki 1995; Za Ondekoza 1999).

Combined with a variety of interviews, including many in the Japanese-language journal *Taikology* (first published in 1988 by the Cultural Research Section of the Asano Taiko drum manufacturing company), these sources have helped to create an overview of *wadaiko* history which has informed the analyses contained in the following chapters. *Taikology* is the primary Japanese-language print source of information for those interested in *wadaiko*, presenting interviews and historical articles alongside ones about individual drumming styles and special events. Of particular relevance to this dissertation is writer Mogi Hitoshi's series of articles in *Taikology* under the heading of "Taiko Folklore" (*Taiko no Minzokugaku*), published from 2004 to 2011, which delved into the history of *wadaiko* groups and performance styles (see, for example, Mogi 2008, 2009, 2010, 2010; these articles are further discussed in the following section).

Meanwhile, there are a number of instructional guides published in Japan that help to shed light on the various performance practices used by *wadaiko* performers. One of the most

³⁰ A full list of these sources has been provided in the Bibliography, in a sub-heading under "Primary Sources."

high-profile books is the *Japanese Taiko Instruction Manual (Nihon Taiko Kyōhon)*, published by the Nippon Taiko Foundation (Nippon Taiko Foundation 2006).³¹ This guide covers the history of the art form and related folk drumming traditions, introduces basic performance practices (stance, grip, hitting technique, etc.), and provides several practice pieces and exercises. It is derived from an earlier publication by Osuwa Daiko Gakuen entitled *Japanese Drums (Nihon no Taiko)*, associated with the first *wadaiko* group Osuwa Daiko (discussed in Chapter 2); in addition to including historical and performance practice information, this older publication also featured several transcriptions of pieces performed by the group (Osuwa Daiko Gakuen 1994). Beyond these two sources there are a number of performance manuals that have been published in recent years (see Asano 2005; Sendo 2007; Taiko Center 1992; Tamura 2001; Tanaka 2003). Covering many of the same concept and practices, they all have slight differences owing to the experiences of and performance style used by their authors. Of course, some of the more unique performance styles used by *wadaiko* artists are not widely performed or taught, so it is rare to find mention of them in these manuals.

This print data has been complimented with audio and video recordings featuring the groups at the center of this dissertation. Performance clips uploaded to YouTube have also been consulted, but they have only been directly cited in this dissertation if they were uploaded by the

³¹ The Nippon Taiko Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting “Japanese traditional Taiko culture both domestically and internationally.” <http://www.nippon-taiko.or.jp/english/index.html> (Accessed July 23, 2012)

artists themselves.³² At the same time, there have been two documentaries released about *wadaiko* in the United States that have been consulted in the writing of this document (*Big Drum: Taiko in the United States* 2005; *The Spirit of Taiko* 2005).³³

1.4.2 Secondary Sources – “Taiko Studies”

It is only within the last twenty-five years that scholars in both English and Japanese have turned their attention to *wadaiko* performance. That is not to say that *wadaiko* was outside of scholastic interest before this time, however, as there had been glimpses of academic interest in the art form, such as Susan Asai’s 1985 survey of Buddhist *wadaiko* groups in the United States (Asai 1985). Further, folklore scholar Nishitsunoi Masahiro – who had been involved with the art form as part of his work with the National Theatre of Japan – included a discussion of *wadaiko* group Osuwa Daiko in a 1985 book dealing with Japanese festivals (Nishitsunoi 1985). Nevertheless, the start of more comprehensive study of *wadaiko* was heralded by the 1988 publication of the first issue of *Taikology*, a journal issued by the Cultural Research Section of the Asano Taiko drum manufacturing company. While written more for the performer and enthusiast than for the scholar, *Taikology* has routinely included historical and analytical articles submitted by scholars such as Nishitsunoi.

³² This is not necessarily a decision based on popularity or performance quality, but rather an acknowledgement of the nebulous nature of copyright on websites like YouTubeVideos posted on YouTube by the artists themselves represent material that the performers permit to be shared and re-shared without financial gain.

³³ A full list of audio/video sources can be found in the Bibliography, in a sub-heading under “Primary Sources.”

Mogi Hitoshi's articles dealing with *wadaiko* history in *Taikology* – part of the previously mentioned article series subtitled “Taiko Folklore” (*Taiko no Minzokugaku*) – are of deeper scholastic interest for the way in which he discusses and analyzes the manner in which the art form evolved out of folk drumming arts and into the modern international phenomenon performed largely on concert stages. Mogi is a producer of traditional entertainment (*dentō Geinō purodyuusaa*), section manager of entertainment at the National Engei Hall in Tokyo.³⁴ In a series of articles from 2004 to 2011, Mogi provided insight into the history of *wadaiko* performance, bringing together interviews and archival research to highlight the development of the art form through a survey of groups, individuals, and performance styles. A series of articles about the groups Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko have been particularly influential in the writing of this dissertation, as he quotes directly from a number of newspaper articles and similar sources that are not available to the general public (Mogi 2008, 2009, 2010, 2010). While these articles are more factual than analytical (hence their inclusion in the Primary Sources section above), analytical sections such as his examination of the various discourses built up by Oguchi Daihachi and Osuwa Daiko have shed much light on not just the history of *wadaiko* performance but how the history has been discussed (Mogi 2010).

A broader scholastic recognition of *wadaiko* beyond *Taikology* began in 1990, with the second volume of a series about traditional Japanese folk arts entitled *Folk Performing Arts 2* (*Minzoku Geinō 2*). Edited by Nishitsunoi, the book contained a section entitled “Japanese Drums” (“Nihon no Taiko”) featuring several articles related to *wadaiko* performance (Honda

³⁴ The combination of English and Japanese words in this name comes from the official English-language Japan Arts Council page. http://www.ntj.jac.go.jp/english/access/facilities_02.html (accessed April 13, 2013).

The Japanese name is *Kokuritsu Engei-jō* (“National Entertainment Hall”).

1990; Kojima 1990; Misumi 1990; Nishitsunoi 1990). The writings were as much a survey of folk drumming traditions as they were of contemporary developments, but the emergence of *wadaiko* performance is acknowledged; in Kojima Haruko's section, for example, special mention is made of "a new form of music with taiko at its center" (Kojima 1990, 104).

Occasional recognition of the growth of *wadaiko* continued in various formats over the next few years. In 1994, Yagi Yasuyuki published an article in the journal *Jinbun Chiri* discussing the rise of *wadaiko* performance in Nagasaki prefecture and the manner in which groups deal with the interplay between local and national identities (Yagi 1994). Meanwhile, Susan Asai acknowledged "The Taiko Drumming Phenomenon" in her 1995 discussion of Japanese-American music making (Asai 1995). Also in 1995, Mark Tusler completed the first master's thesis about *wadaiko*, a case study of the group Los Angeles Matsuri Taiko in an effort to document ensemble *wadaiko* performance in the United States (Tusler 1995). Two years later, Otsuka Chie completed her own thesis, an ethnography of *wadaiko* groups in California in which she demonstrates how the formation of knowledge and social practice is informed by *wadaiko* activities (Otsuka 1997). Otsuka briefly outlines the historical background of the art form before proceeding into an examination of the learning process as based upon observations of San Francisco Taiko Dojo and San Jose Taiko. In addition to this English-language document, Otsuka also published an article in *Taikology* based on this research, containing some details not found in her thesis (Otsuka 1998).

Also published in 1997 was a festschrift entitled *Sounds of West – Sounds of East: Maki Ishii's Music – Striding Two Musical Worlds* –. Dedicated to Berlin-based composer Ishii Maki (1936-2003), a noted Berlin-based Japanese composer of classical music, it included amongst its offerings a chapter written by Akiyama Kuniharu about Ishii's work "Monochrome,"

commissioned by the *wadaiko* group Ondekoza, in which Akiyama ties the composition to broader experimentations and changes in compositional style by Ishii (Akiyama 1997). This examination of Ishii's approach to percussion music was the first analysis of *wadaiko* repertoire, a crucial step forward in the burgeoning field of "Taiko Studies." It would be followed up two years later by Kenny Endo's master's thesis "Yodan Uchi: A Contemporary Composition for Taiko," featuring an examination of a signature piece of Sukeroku Taiko, one of the pioneering *wadaiko* groups in Japan (Endo 1999). Informed by Endo's own experiences, as he is a professional *wadaiko* player who studied with original members of Sukeroku Taiko in the 1980s, it is the most comprehensive study of a single piece of *wadaiko* repertoire written to date, detailing the history of Sukeroku Taiko and "Yodan Uchi" while also analyzing specific musical and visual elements of the work.

The wave of *wadaiko* studies that began in the latter half of the 1990s continued into the 21st Century. In several articles published at the beginning of the century, Stanley Shikuma discussed how the performance style emerged in the Pacific Northwest of the United States, while Konagaya Hideyo focused upon *wadaiko* activities in California (Konagaya 2001; Shikuma 2000). Meanwhile, Linda Fujie published an article highlighting the international spread of the art form (Fujie 2001).

A crucial development occurred in 2001, when a series of articles were published linking the development of *wadaiko* in the United States to changing discourses of ethnic identity within Japanese-American and larger Asian-American communities. Within what was positioned as a general survey of *wadaiko* in the United States, Terada Yoshitaka demonstrated how the art form was – and continues to be – used to combat ethnic and gender stereotypes (Terada 2001). Additionally, Paul Yoon used a case study of New York-based Soh Daiko to demonstrate the

fluid nature of identity and changing boundaries of Asian-American identity amongst younger generations (Yoon 2001). This identity-based approach to *wadaiko* studies would be utilized by many scholars in the years to come, and remains one of the most popular scholastic approaches to the art form (see Carle 2008; Kobayashi 2006; Powell 2008; Wong 2005, 2006; Yoon 2009).

However, it must be acknowledged that by the wealth of identity studies done in relation to *wadaiko* performance has the potential of suggesting that it is the only issue relevant to performers. Indeed, as acknowledged by several artists I interviewed and interacted with during my fieldwork, even amongst Japanese-American performers of *wadaiko* not everyone is immediately concerned with the connection of *wadaiko* performance to the expression of Japanese-American or Asian-American identity. As one group leader from Hawaii put it in an interview for the 2005 documentary *Big Drum: Taiko in the United States*, after being struck by the prominence of identity discourses used by performers on the American mainland: “we do it ‘cause it’s fun” (*Big Drum: Taiko in the United States* 2005). Indeed, the inclusion of Hawaiian groups in a study of *wadaiko* in the United States complicates the identity discourse, owing to differing conceptions of identity (see, for example, Newton, et al. 1988). Even as these writings that have focused upon identity in relation to *wadaiko* have contribute much to our understanding of the genre, then, they only represent one facet of the art form.

2003 was another milestone year for *wadaiko* studies, as three dissertations about the art form were completed at universities in California. Shawn Bender discussed the development of the art form in Japan, placing it within the larger context of conflicts between local and national identity along with the appropriation and redefinition of objects from the past within modern societies (Bender 2003). He would expand upon this topic in several other formats, culminating in the 2012 publication of his book *Taiko Boom* (as previously mentioned, the first academic

book in English focusing strictly on *wadaiko*) (Bender 2005, 2010, 2012). I owe a certain debt to the works of Shawn Bender in regards to this dissertation. He was the first scholar – and to date, one of only a few – to examine *wadaiko* in Japan; the historical background he provides in his writings have been particularly helpful in the construction of a history of *wadaiko* music. It is through his writings that I have been led to many Japanese-language sources that have illuminated the history of the genre; the discussions in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 in particular are a result of studying both Bender’s writings and those sources that he revealed to the English-speaking audience (such as Mogi’s articles in *Taikology*, discussed above).

At the same time that Bender was completing his dissertation, Kimberly Powell was also finishing her Ph.D. work. Her dissertation is primarily concerned with the social and cultural organization of learning as found within the activities of the group San Jose Taiko, but it also includes several chapters dealing with both soloing – that is, extended improvisation by an individual – and the compositional process (Powell 2003). Meanwhile, Mark Tusler completed in the same year his dissertation about the pedagogical process and conceptualizations of power as held by members of *wadaiko* groups in California, an expansion of his early thesis (Tusler 2003).

The completion of these three dissertations heralded a new surge in activity in the burgeoning field of Taiko Studies, named after the general term for *wadaiko* used by performers in the United States. Ethnic and identity studies continued to be a favorite topic for scholars, with the scope spreading to include groups in Japan (Creighton 2007; Konagaya 2007; Terada 2008). This was not just limited to English-language sources, as Japanese scholars also began tackling the topic in their native language (Izumi 2008; Konagaya 2002).

Another series of dissertations concerning *wadaiko* performance were completed beginning in 2009, as Brian Vogel discussed the performance practices of *wadaiko* and several

other folk drumming traditions that have fed into the art form (Vogel 2009). Angela Ahlgren's 2011 dissertation, meanwhile, continued the focus on race, gender, and sexuality in *wadaiko* while also widening the geographical scope to include groups in places such as Minneapolis, Minnesota (Ahlgren 2011). These studies were further complimented by a series of meetings taking place at broader gatherings; in 2010, a panel about *wadaiko* performance was held as part of the 55th Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, while in 2012 a discussion panel was held at Wesleyan University at the 2nd Eastern Taiko Conference featuring *wadaiko* scholars from across the nation.

1.4.3 Broadening the Scope of Taiko Studies

For all the tremendous growth in studies about *wadaiko* over the past 25 years, however, the majority of articles and book chapters in English have been concerned with the social context of *wadaiko* – in particular, the relationship of *wadaiko* performance to discourses of identity on many different levels (ethnic, national, and so forth). Aside from Akiyama's book section and Endo's thesis, very few writings have been devoted to the analysis of *wadaiko* music. Mark Tusler includes within his thesis and dissertation analyses of a few pieces, while Powell offers several transcriptions within her dissertation, but they are subservient to the larger whole, almost seeming at times like they were included to remind the reader that the subject under study is in fact a musical genre. Meanwhile, Vogel's dissertation, while helping to further knowledge of *wadaiko* performance practices, is more descriptive than analytical; further, his discussion of *wadaiko* is but a fraction of the document, with more space given towards a survey of festival drumming styles.

Part of the reason for this lack of scholarship may rest with the fact that as many studies have come from the fields of anthropology and sociology as from ethnomusicology. This background informs a particular approach to the performance style that emphasizes the cultural context of musical performance over the music itself. By focusing upon the development of *wadaiko* music, I look to complement previous studies while simultaneously adding new information to the larger academic discourse about the musical genre. Indeed, I seek to demonstrate the viability of considering *wadaiko* as a MUSICAL genre, showing that the development of compositions and musical styles have contributed to the growth of the art form.

There are other gaps within Taiko Studies that are addressed in this dissertation. Previous studies have focused solely upon group *wadaiko* activities; the emergence of soloists in the 1980s, an important step in the evolution of *wadaiko* performance (and discussed in Chapter 6 of this dissertation), has not been examined. Further, the chronological range of writings about *wadaiko* has been rather limited. The majority of scholars have restricted their studies to groups that emerged the 1960s and early 1970s. While these groups were vital in the development of the art form – indeed, they are the subject of the first few chapters of this dissertation – and the discourses of identity that have often captured the attention of scholars were crucial elements in the beginning of activities, this limited chronological range has subsequently presented only a partial view of *wadaiko* performance. English-language scholars are particularly guilty of this constraint; scholars in Japan have generally taken a broader approach to the art form, possibly because of the wider range of publication opportunities available to them (such as *Taikology*) and the smaller emphasis placed upon identity studies by Japanese-language scholars. Developments in the art form – such as the rise of *wadaiko* soloists – that have taken place since the 1970s are at the fringe of English-language scholastic studies, as are groups founded in the late 1970s and

beyond. At the same time, the activities of newer generations of performers – that is, the children of the first generation of *wadaiko* performers, and even their children – has yet to be examined. Paul Yoon does cover these items to a limited degree in his more recent publications (see Yoon 2007, 2009), but even then it is a small part of a larger study, and the older generation is the main focus. Thus, with this dissertation I look to address this chronological lacuna, highlighting not only the early days of *wadaiko* performance but also the activities of *wadaiko* artists in more recent years.

At the same time, there exists a geographical gap of sorts in Taiko Studies. Writers have focused upon groups and activities either in North America – typically the United States – or Japan. A cross-cultural, intercultural approach to the art form has yet to be taken, owing largely to the fact that many English-speaking scholars writing about *wadaiko* do not speak or read Japanese. This dissertation has been immediately affected by my ability to speak and read Japanese. Much of the historical data gathered during my research was available only in Japanese. Further, my interaction with individual artists in Japan – which yielded great insights into individual pieces and the development of musical style – was directly impacted by my ability to communicate with them in Japanese. As such, this dissertation is not only an attempt to address a perceived gap in the current literature through an intercultural perspective on *wadaiko* performance and a focus on the repertoire created by artists, but also was born from a desire to create a English-language intercultural, musical history of *wadaiko* that utilizes the wealth of materials in Japanese. The analysis of *wadaiko* within a single country limits the scope and provides a false projection of the art form as have developed in the two countries with little interaction between the two. As shall be demonstrated in this dissertation, from the beginning of the art form's history its evolution and the repertoire created and performed by artists has been

shaped by intercultural flows. In taking an intercultural approach to the art form, then, I look to reflect the reality of the *wadaiko* world, particularly as performers and pieces continually move between the United States and Japan.

1.4.4 Beyond Taiko Studies

As *wadaiko* performers routinely draw from Japanese folk and classical performance arts, a study of their music must also take into consideration broader studies of Japanese music. William Malm's writings on both classical and folk music in Japan remain some of the most comprehensive English-language sources on the subject, including his landmark book about Japanese music first published in 1959 and updated in 2000 (Malm 2000). Several other authors have also published surveys of Japanese music that contribute to knowledge about that field (de Ferranti 2000; Wade 2005).

Within Japanese-language literature, there are several books that deal with drumming in Japan on a broader scale that can be of use to a study of *wadaiko* performance. Mogi Hitoshi's 2003 book *A Manual of Japanese Taiko: Folklore, Tradition, and the New Wave* (*Nyūmon Nihon no Taiko-Minzoku, Dentō Soshite Nyuuweebu*) provides a detailed overview of the history of taiko in Japan and the varying ways in which they have been used (Mogi 2003). His treatment of the development of *wadaiko* in relation to other performance styles helps to place *wadaiko* within a greater framework of Japanese musical traditions.

There are also several more detailed studies of Japanese musical performance practices of immediate relevant to *wadaiko* performance. Malm dealt with more specific elements of Japanese classical Japanese drumming in several chapters in a 1986 book (Malm 1986). These chapters provide a detailed overview of not only the performance practices of Japanese classical

drumming but also some of the compositional techniques that are used, further enhancing his 1960 overview of the drumming used in Noh music (Malm 1960). He also published a study of Japanese festival music that dealt with the boundaries between variation and improvisation within that practice (Malm 1975).

Japanese festival music, and in particular the music found in Tokyo, was examined by Linda Fujie in her 1986 dissertation (Fujie 1986). While Fujie is largely concerned with social change and how traditional musical forms are preserved, she also includes a thorough discussion of performance practices and transmission techniques. Several other authors have written about specific Japanese folk drumming traditions as well, providing valuable insight into the styles that have influenced the development of *wadaiko*. Beyond the examination of *Edo-bayashi* – that is, the festival music of the Shitamachi area of Tokyo (discussed in Chapter 3 of this document) – and festival drumming styles from the island of Hachijō (south of Tokyo) in the aforementioned dissertation by Brian Vogel, there is an article by Jane Alaszewska that highlights the history of the drumming performed on Hachijo island (Alaszewska 2008).

1.5 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

As this dissertation is a history of *wadaiko* based on the development of musical style, I have organized the chapter topics according largely to chronological considerations, following the evolution of *wadaiko* over the past six decades. This sequential approach allows for the demonstration of how certain musical trends emerged over time, how the art form has grown interculturally, and how certain topics of conversation have developed. Chapters 2 through 7, dealing with the emergence of different groups or individual artists, also feature analyses of

several works that are both reflective of the artist(s)'s style and that I have determined to be influential in the growth of *wadaiko* music.

In Chapter 2, I examine the activities of Oguchi Daihachi and his group Osuwa Daiko. Oguchi's background is revealed, as is the manner in which the group emerged into the public sphere beginning in the mid-1950s. beyond surveying the music created by Oguchi, I reveal how he and other members of Osuwa Daiko represented themselves as the successors of tradition (in turn examining how this discourse impacted the evolution of the group's music).

Sukeroku Taiko, the first professional *wadaiko* group in Japan, is the focus of Chapter 3. Highlighting how this group emerged from *bon daiko* competitions in Tokyo and onto club and cabaret stages in the late 1960s, I discuss how group members rearranged traditional folk drumming styles for the professional stage, how Japanese theatrical drumming was brought into *wadaiko* performance, and how Sukeroku Taiko members advanced *wadaiko* as an intercultural art form.

I focus upon the rise of Ondekoza in the 1970s and its successor Kodo in the 1980s in Chapter 5. I examine the impact of founder Den Tagayasu's notion of "revitalizing" tradition for a new generation on the development of repertoire and the role the group played in the continued internationalization of *wadaiko* performance. Further, I highlight the circumstances surrounding emergence of Kodo, a group consisting of the original members of Ondekoza that could potentially be called the original group's "successor." Kodo's similarities to and differences from Ondekoza are a topic of discuss, as is the influence the group had development of *wadaiko* music in the 1980s and 1990s.

In Chapter 5 I survey the rise of *wadaiko* in the United States, building upon the intercultural foundations laid by the groups discussed in the previous three chapters. Three

groups important to this growth – San Francisco Taiko Dojo, Kinnara Taiko, and San Jose Taiko – are highlighted, as is the music they created, the different ways in which members engaged in discussion about *wadaiko* performance, and the unique elements brought to the genre as it spread across the Pacific Ocean.

In Chapter 6, I examine the emergence of *wadaiko* soloists, itself an outcome of events discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Focusing upon the activities of Kenny Endo and Hayashi Eitetsu, both of who have connections to groups discussed in the previous chapters, within this chapter I investigate how the taiko went from being an ensemble instrument to one used in a solo situation, as well as examines the music created by these artists for their new performance ventures.

A new generation of *wadaiko* performers debuting in the 1990s and 2000s is the focus of Chapter 7. Spotlighting the activities of the Japanese group GOCOO and the American quartet On Ensemble, I demonstrate how both the music performed by these groups and the image presented to audience changed as performers embraced different modes of expression and senses of identity, taking advantage of and building upon the advances made by the generation of performers discussed in Chapters 2 through 6.

Chapter 8 serves as the concluding chapter of the dissertation, in which I discuss how *wadaiko* music has evolved on a broader level while also examining representations of tradition in relation to this music. At the same time, I highlight the manner in which the development of *wadaiko* music has impacted conceptions of originality and issues of performance rights, as well the manner in which knowledge about *wadaiko* performance is transmitted and the role of language in this process.

2.0 OSUWA DAIKO: “RESTORATION” OF A LOST DRUMMING STYLE

It is hard to overstate the impact that Oguchi Daihachi had on the *wadaiko* world, for indeed he was the one that began the contemporary movement to use taiko as the primary instruments in an ensemble. When he passed away on June 27, 2008, newspapers not just in Japan but also in the United States published his obituary, lamenting the loss of “the master Japanese drummer who led the spread of the art of ‘taiko’ drumming to the United States and throughout Japan” (Associated Press 2008). A color picture accompanied the obituary in many newspapers, showing Oguchi behind his “taiko set,” one arm in the air as the other hits the drum, fire from a large torch blazing behind him (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Oguchi Daihachi

Photo © Associated Press.

At the North American Taiko Conference held in Los Angeles the following year, a special performance was given of one of Oguchi's most famous pieces, "Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi." A single taiko was placed at the center of the front of the stage; upon it leaned a picture frame containing several pictures of Oguchi. San Francisco Taiko Dojo founder Tanaka Seiichi – who had studied under Oguchi – began the tribute by chanting a prayer in honor of his mentor as bamboo flutes played a somber melody. Following the chant, the hall exploded with sound as Tanaka led several dozen drummers in a performance of his arrangement of "Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi." Members of several different *wadaiko* groups – all with a connection to Oguchi or Tanaka – gathered together to give a rousing performance that drew the audience of several hundred to their feet.

The performance was a tribute to the man who began the modern *wadaiko* movement, a testament to the popularity of the art form in not just Japan but the United States as well. Oguchi Daihachi created a new performance style that spread around the world; his compositions are

played by countless performers, and many have mimicked his composition techniques as they have created new repertoire for their own groups. At the same time, his views on the connection of his new drumming style to traditional performance arts helped to create a particular discourse that remains prominent in discussions about *wadaiko* to this day. As Mogi Hitoshi mused in a memorial article written soon after Oguchi's passing, he left "a huge footprint in the taiko world" (Mogi 2009, 64).

2.1 FROM BAND LEADER TO WADAIKO PIONEER

Oguchi Daihachi was born in 1924 in the Oguchi district of the village of Hirano (later incorporated into the city of Okaya), near the banks of Lake Suwa in the mountains of Nagano Prefecture in central Japan (Mogi 2009).³⁵ In his late teens he moved to Tokyo to study at Waseda University; during this time, he also studied Western drum set and played in a local band (Bender 2012, 49). However, his studies were interrupted when he was drafted into the army and sent to fight in China in the Second Sino-Japanese War during World War II. Captured and held as a prisoner of war, he remained there until 1947 (Takata 1998).³⁶

³⁵ A map containing showing Okaya's location on the main Japanese island of Honshu can be seen in Appendix B.2.

³⁶ This chapter owes much to the writings of Shawn Bender, as he was the first English-language scholar to write extensively about Oguchi Daihachi and Osuwa Daiko. However, the Japanese-language sources cited by Bender – and subsequently by me as well – include information not available in Bender's writings; in particular, in a series of articles from 2008-2010, Mogi Hitoshi includes extended direct quotations of archival sources (such as full newspaper articles from regional newspapers). In these cases, I have chosen to cite the original Japanese-language

Upon his return to Japan, Oguchi came back to his hometown of Okaya. After working with his older brother for a time in an electrical parts factory, in 1948 he established a bread manufacturing company called “Daihachi Bread” (Mogi 2009, 65). At the same time, he was also involved in the creation of an amateur band named “Sansei Gakudan” (“Shining Star Band”). Playing a style of music called “light music” (*keiongaku*), they had a repertoire including Hawaiian and tango music and *kayōkyoku*, a genre of Western-influenced Japanese pop music that developed in the beginning of the 20th Century (see Fujie 1989). “Light music” was a continuation of cultural interchange between Japan and the West that had begun in the mid-1800s, when Western clothing, musical styles, and customs “were introduced through new government institutions, including schools and the military services” (Tsutsui 2010, 7-8). For example, as Kitagawa notes, in the late 19th Century a series of school music textbooks were distributed containing songs with Japanese lyrics attached to Western tunes, as well as Western hymns; some native Japanese music was included, primarily *gagaku* court music melodies, but these were in the minority (Kitagawa 2009, 264). Consequently, in the years following World War II, “American pop fashions were served up to the Japanese people by the mass media and commercial interests both American and Japanese” (Tsutsui 2010, 10).

2.1.1 The “Kakuta Memorandum”

A chance discovery in the mid-1950s changed Oguchi’s life forever. Oguchi Kiyohito, owner of a local miso supplier, approached his relative Daihachi and showed him a document called the

source rather than Bender (whether that is Mogi, or writings by Oguchi himself), even if there is an overlap in the presented information.

“Kakuta Memorandum” (*Kakuta Oboegaki*) that had been found in one of his warehouses. It was “a daily journal written during the Meiji era by Oguchi Tōtarō, an ancestor of Oguchi Daihachi” (Mogi 2008, 78). Providing an insight into daily life of that time and referencing a variety of topics of interest to the people at the time – from weather to water rights to world events (there is a mention of the first Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95) – the document was an look into the life of a miso merchant at the end of the 19th Century.

Of particular interest to the descendants of Oguchi Tōtarō was the mention within the pages of “Kakuta Memorandum” of drumming activities. An entry from May 7, 1895, transcribed by Mogi Hitoshi in a 2008 article for the journal *Taikology*, described a drinking party held by Oguchi Tōtarō and several of his friends:

Beyond getting drunk, as a diversion we played the *ō-daiko* at Yakushidō where we had held the renga gathering, saying, “What style is this? Answer if you know it.” Horasuke promptly replied: “That, you know, is the drumming of ‘the loyal retainer’s entrance into death.’”... Then, Horasuke and Chōzō in unison said: “That piece, ‘Kakuta,’ you know it well, don’t you. That style is now died out, and the people who can transmit it are nearly gone; it’s just one of the old songs from the Tsuigawa coast that’s been transmitted since ancient times. It’s good that you know it and revived it tonight at this meeting, showing off the drum,” they said while pressing him. Jisuke began to dance, saying, “I love festivals. We should play every day. If we play every day, during August’s Ofune Matsuri we

could go to Lower Suwa, play loudly in front of the kagura hall and surprise the worshipers.” We all happily agreed. (Mogi 2008, 79) ³⁷

This passage conveys the beginning of an attempt by the group of friends to revive a type of drumming that had been out of practice for several generations in the Okaya region. In the subsequent pages the beginning of rehearsals is discussed, but the discovered fragment ends before the reader is able to find out if the group succeeded in their plans.

While the journal contained within this discovered memorandum alone was intriguing to the descendants of Oguchi Tōtarō, as it offered a glimpse into their ancestor’s daily life, they were excited further by an accompanying section containing a musical score (Figure 4). It was believed to be part of what Oguchi later described as “the *kagura-daiko* had that been handed down in this region until the time of the *Bakumatsu*” (Oguchi 1987, 18).³⁸

³⁷ Mogi provided a transcription of and commentary on a large part of the “Kakuta Memorandum” in issue 33 of *Taikology* as part of his “Taiko Folklore” series, first in a 3 part set about Osuwa Daiko. Hitoshi Mogi, “Osuwa Daiko (Part 1) 御諏訪太鼓 ①,” *Taikorojii たいころじい [Taikology]* 33(2008).

He was able to obtain access to a handwritten copy of the document, created at some point between 1955 and 1964. Unfortunately, according to Mogi the original vanished after the death of Oguchi Kiyohito in the 1980s or early 1990s; thus, his article is one of the few remaining sources about the document.

³⁸ *Bakumatsu* (literally, “end of the curtain”) is the term used to refer to the final years of the Tokugawa shogunate, between 1853 and 1867, characterized by violent clashes between pro-imperial and pro-shogunate forces.

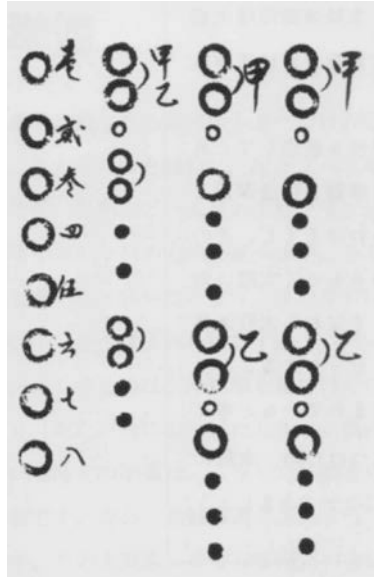


Figure 4. A fragment of the *kagura-daiko* score discovered in Oguchi Kiyohito's miso warehouse³⁹

Kagura-daiko (“kagura drumming”) is the drumming that is part of the accompanying music for *kagura*, a type of Shinto theatrical dance (Petersen 2006).⁴⁰ The music that accompanies these dances – *kagura-bayashi* (“kagura orchestra”) – varies depending on the region, just as there is not a single dance performed across Japan. However, the instrumentation is generally the same: “transverse bamboo flute, drum of medium size, and often a big barrel

³⁹ This small segment is believed to be the only remaining element of the discovered score. At the very least, it is the only section that has ever been published, and is the only part in the records of the Nippon Taiko Foundation. Osuwa Daiko Gakuen, *Nihon No Taiko* 日本の太鼓 [Japanese Taiko] (Okaya, Japan: Daihachi Oguchi & Osuwa Daiko Gakuen, 1994), 50.

⁴⁰ Many scholars further divide *kagura* into two types: *mi-kagura*, performed in the Imperial court, and *sato-kagura*, performed outside the court.

drum” (Kishibe 1982, 82). The transverse bamboo flute is called a *fue*.⁴¹ Meanwhile, the medium-sized drum often used is a type of *shime-daiko* (“tightened drum;” also called a *tsukeshime-daiko* (also “tightened drum”) – a rope-tightened drum – called a *daibyōshi-daiko* (“large rhythm drum”), a cylindrical-shaped drum positioned perpendicular to the performer also with the heads tightened by ropes and played with long, narrow sticks.⁴² What Kishibe calls a “big barrel drum” is typically a *byō-uchi-daiko* (“tack-hit drum”) – a drum with the skin attached to the body with tacks – with a diameter of 10 to 12 inches (Figure 5). The flute provides the melody, while the drums serve as accompaniment.

⁴¹ *Fue* are often subdivided according to the type of bamboo used in construction, and named as such; for example, a *shinobue* (the ‘f’ in *fue* becoming a ‘b’ in a compound word) is a flute made out of a type of bamboo called *shino*.

⁴² Some performers and manufacturers in Japan use the terms *shime-daiko* and *tsukeshime-daiko* interchangeably, while others make a clear difference. The Taiko Resource page at Taiko.com, for example, claims that “the tsukeshime daiko has a thicker, stronger body and uses much thicker leather for the heads than a classical shime.” http://www.taiko.com/taiko_resource/taiko.html (accessed March 3, 2013)



Figure 5. *Kagura-bayashi*

Instruments from L to R: *daibyōshi-daiko*, *fue*, *byō-uchi-daiko*.

Sanno Matsuri, Hie Shrine, Akasaka, Tokyo, Japan. June 15, 2012.

Photo by the author.

Oguchi Kiyohito was quite excited by the discovery of the old music fragment in his miso warehouse. Eager to continue his ancestor’s mission of reviving a local drumming tradition, he approached his relative Daihachi and asked him to interpret the score. However, as Daihachi later noted, “it was about one hundred years since that *kagura* went out of use, and no one could understand how to read the score,” including himself, who was trained only in Western music; it was as if “a Western-style cook took in an order for sushi” (Oguchi 1987, 19-20).

Nevertheless, he found the whole concept of the revival interesting, and decided to learn how to decipher the score. He visited local shrines, “learning how to read the music score from the heads of the shrines and learning the basics of how to play *kagura-daiko*” (Oguchi 1987, 21). His quest was further supported by the discovery of a blacksmith in Okaya by the name of Narusawa Sagazaharu who had learned *kagura-daiko* from Oguchi Tōtarō himself. Based on his

consultation with local shrine heads and lessons with Narusawa, Oguchi Daihachi finally learned how to decipher the score discovered in his relative's miso warehouse (Figure 6).

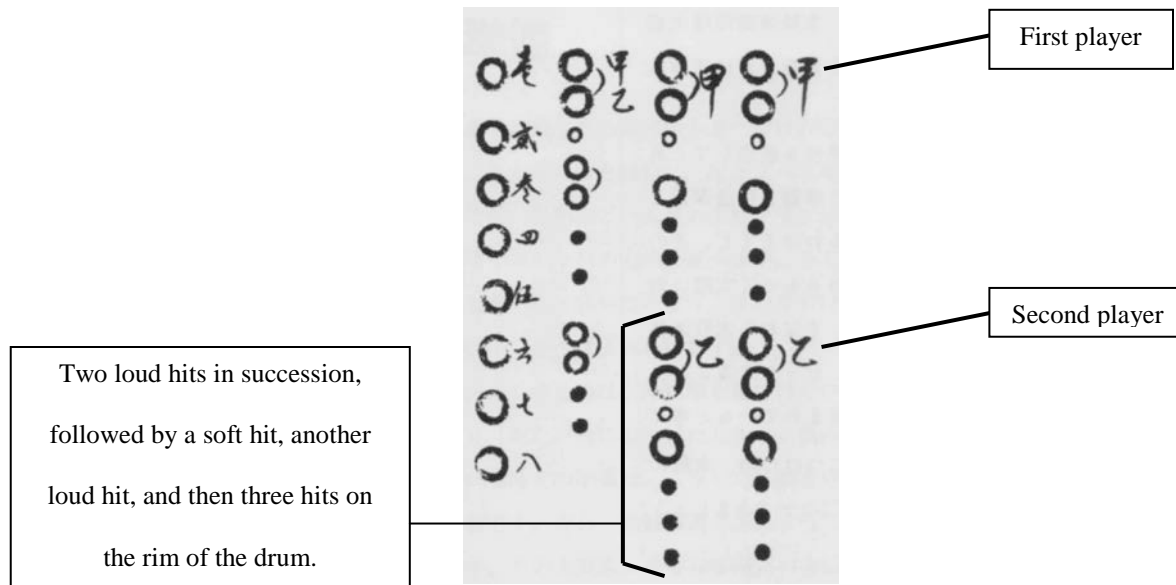


Figure 6. Deciphering the discovered *kagura-daiko* score

The music was to be played by two drummers, signified by markings written to the right of each column of notation. It consisted of two rhythmic phrases alternating between the two drummers, followed by two unison lines (Osuwa Daiko Gakuen 1994, 50). The different types of circles signify different ways to hit the drum. A large open circle represents a single loud note, called “don” within the *kuchi-shōga* syllabary.⁴³ Middle-sized open circles stand for a slightly softer hit, called “ton.” The smallest open circles are soft hits, “to” if played by the right hand

⁴³ *Kuchi-shōga* is a syllabary in which specific words represent specific sounds. There is a syllabary for each drum in Japan. Variations between regions do exist, but there are also many commonalities. The *kuchi-shōga* to be used in this dissertation is of the sort most commonly used in Japan and the United States, unless otherwise noted.

and “ko” if by the left.⁴⁴ Small filled-in circles meant that the drummer is to hit the rim of the drum (called *fuchi-uchi*; “hitting the rim”).

Very little is provided in the fragment in regards to note length, owing to the rather vague nature of *kuchi-shōga* in general (which is prescriptive rather than descriptive, telling the reader what sound to make rather than how it should be made); the only indication is a curved line connecting two loud notes at the beginning of each segment. According to later materials provided by Osuwa Daiko, this line means that the two notes are to be played in succession; it can then be inferred that they are faster than the other notes (as indicated in the transcription in Figure 7) (Osuwa Daiko Gakuen 1994, 50). Meanwhile, in lessons with Narusawa Sagazaharu Oguchi learned that the music was to be played with one hand (the right hand), and that it was to be played rather slowly.

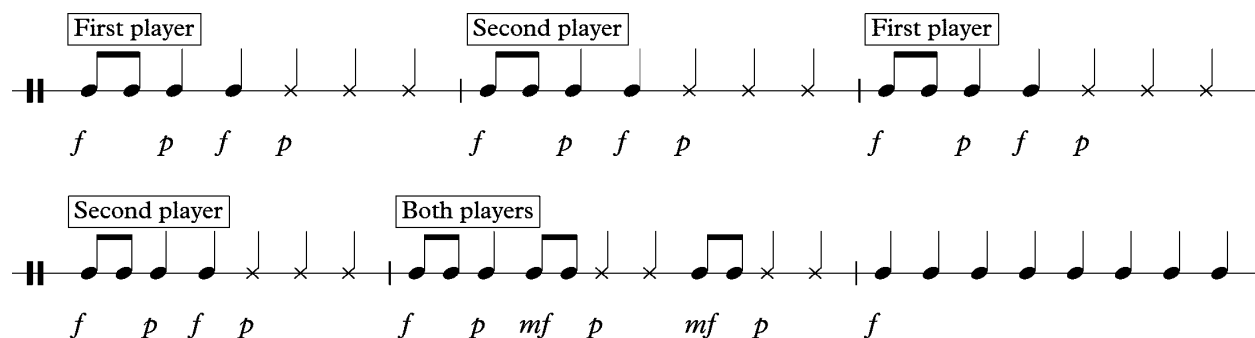


Figure 7. Transcription of the kagura-daiko fragment, using Western rhythmic notation⁴⁵

⁴⁴ “Ton” and “to” are *kuchi-shōga* syllables that appear to be exclusive to Osuwa Daiko. I have included them because they are used in *Nihon no Taiko* to describe the music in the discovered fragment.

⁴⁵ In this transcription – as well as all subsequent ones in this dissertation – regular noteheads indicate a hit on the drumhead, while an x-shaped notehead indicates a hit on the rim (*fuchi-uchi*). When other noteheads are used, they will be discussed in relation to their respective transcriptions.

With this basic understanding of the *kuchi-shōga* and fundamental performance practices, Oguchi was able to piece together the sound of the music in the discovered fragment. He then proceeded to teach others, with the intent of presenting the recovered music at the Suwa Grand Shrine just like his ancestor. However, as the group he had gathered began to practice the music, Oguchi found himself to be dissatisfied. The music was too slow for his liking, and he thought the rhythms were simplistic. Further, it was supposed to be played by just two people, but as the group came together to learn the music he thought, “all of us playing together is definitely more enjoyable” (Oguchi 1987, 25).

In a moment of resolve, Oguchi decided to take the discovered *kagura-daiko* fragment and create out of it something new. So that everyone could play at the same time, the group gathered any *taiko* they could find in local antique stores. The sound of many drums being hit simultaneously was contrary to the normal practice of having only a few drums in an ensemble (and elicited more than a few complaints from people in the neighborhood around their practice space). Nevertheless, it was exciting, and spurred them on to further experimentation. The group then began to experiment with the tempo of the work, moving it beyond the slow pace that Narusawa had taught Oguchi. Oguchi would later write:

Certainly, our rhythms are fast in comparison to the past. However, it isn't necessarily a good thing to match up with the past no matter what. (Oguchi 1987, 28).

The tempo was sped up to match what they believe to be the tempo of the times, bringing it closer to the “light music” that was popular in Japan at the time.

Finally, Oguchi arranged the discovered music to take advantage of the many drums of different sizes that they had gathered. In this he moved beyond the music contained within the

fragment, adding parts that would allow for everyone to play and make a contribution. For inspiration in this endeavor, he looked to the Western music that he had been playing with the Sansei Gakudan band. Oguchi realized that the drums they had gathered could generally be divided into three groups: high-, middle-, and low-pitched taiko. The high-pitched drums – small *tsukeshime-daiko* (generally called *shime-daiko* in this context) – could provide a fundamental rhythm that everyone would follow. Larger drums – *byō-uchi-daiko* known as *nagadō-daiko* (literally, “long-bodied drum”), the middle part of the ensemble – could play a rhythmic ‘melody.’ Finally, the largest drums in the group – *ō-daiko* (“big drum”), a larger *byō-uchi-daiko* than a *nagadō-daiko* – could provide a low sound to push everything forward. By utilizing this orchestration method, fashioned “when thinking completely about a band,” Oguchi created a new compositional and instrumentation style that would serve as a model for future *wadaiko* groups (Figure 8) (Oguchi 1995, 13).



Figure 8. A typical *wadaiko* group setup, based on Oguchi's model

Featuring a *Nagadō-daiko* (drum in the middle of the picture as well as the left), *shime-daiko* (second and third from left), and *ō-daiko* (top left corner)

Public Performance by Hawaii Matsuri Taiko at the Pan-Pacific Festival, Waikiki, Honolulu, HI, June 7, 2009.

Photo by the author

Applying these instrumentation choices and orchestration techniques to the discovered *kagura-daiko* fragment, and subsequently adding new parts to support his new way of thinking, Oguchi created the piece “Suwa Ikazuchi,” a work fashioned by “incorporating methods from Western music onto a base of tradition” (Oguchi 1987, 30). According to Oguchi’s book *Tenku* and period newspapers quote by Mogi, it was premiered in 1957 at a performance at a banquet held by the Okaya Textile Store Association, a performance that also served as the debut of what was at that time called the Suwa Daiko Hozonkai (Mogi 2009, 66).⁴⁶

⁴⁶ See section 4 of this chapter for more on the term “Hozonkai.”

2.2 “SUWA IKAZUCHI”⁴⁷

While based on Oguchi’s emerging thoughts on how to use multiple taiko in a single ensemble, the instrumentation and stage setup for “Suwa Ikazuchi” (“Suwa Thunder”) can vary depending on the number of performers. A typical arrangement might feature pairs of *nagadō-daiko* (set up on the two sides of a stage), an *ō-daiko*, and another of Oguchi’s innovations, the taiko set. Just as Oguchi applied Western-influenced orchestration concepts to the arrangement of the drums, bringing together multiple taiko into a single ensemble, he also integrated the idea into the grouping of several drums so that one person could play them (Figure 9). It would not be used in every piece, but it was certainly the centerpiece of “Suwa Ikazuchi.” From behind his taiko set, Oguchi would drive the performance, signaling changes in tempo and transitions between passages while also occasionally improvising.

⁴⁷ “Suwa Ikazuchi” was composed by Oguchi Daihachi, founder of Osuwa Daiko. The inclusion of transcriptions of this work has been done with the expressed permission of the Osuwa Daiko executive office.



Figure 9. Oguchi Daihachi behind his taiko set

At the Kitakami/Michinoku Arts Festival, Kitakami, Iwate Prefecture, Japan, August 8, 1991

Screenshot from a video shared on YouTube.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wiv8PT_0HkM (accessed November 18, 2012)

The crash of a large gong (*dō*), hung on a metal frame and similar to that used in Western orchestras, signals the beginning of “Suwa Ikazuchi,” followed immediately by a roll by Oguchi on his taiko set that starts slow and gets faster, akin to a ball bouncing on the floor.⁴⁸ Over the call of the *horagai* (a conch shell trumpet), a chant is performed akin to *norito*, Shinto prayer chanting; Oguchi chanted with arms held up in the air, giving a performance an air of religious ritual (Figure 10). The contents of the chant suggest that it was taken to some extent from rituals from the Suwa Grand Shrine, with references to the gods of rain and thunder looking down upon

⁴⁸ A Western musical term, a “roll” is a technique used to produce a sustained sound on a percussion instrument by rapidly hitting with strokes that alternate between the right and left hand. The Japanese equivalent term is “*oroshi*” – see the next paragraph.

the performance, but it also announces the name of the group performing and the title of the piece itself.⁴⁹



Figure 10. Oguchi Daihachi chanting at the beginning of "Suwa Ikazuchi"

Performance at the "Nihon no Taiko" exhibition, World Expo, Tsukuba, Japan, 1985

Screenshot from a video from a private library.

Following the chant, the drummers begin a roll that begins slowly and gets faster (sometimes called a *yama-oroshi*, literally “coming down the mountain,” as it sounds as if something is gaining speed as it rolls down a mountain). The rolls develop freely, with each performer entering and speeding up as they see fit, creating a cacophony of sounds as the many different-sized drums overlap with each other. Eventually, Oguchi begins to play on the *shime-daiko* a repeated long-short-long rhythmic pattern in a triple feel that serves as the foundation

⁴⁹ Given these references to rain, it could be said that the crash of the gong and rolls at the beginning of the piece are meant to evoke images of lightning and thunder. And, of course, there is the name of the piece itself: “Suwa Thunder.”

“Suwa Ikazuchi” is in essence a series of variations on this rhythmic pattern, both in terms of sound and rhythm. For example, the first variation involves alternating between hitting the drumhead and hitting the rim with a slight elongation of one segment of the phrase (Figure 12; seen in the latter part of video clip “2-1-Suwa Ikazuchi”). This rhythmic pattern could be said to be the descendant of the discovered rhythmic fragment from Oguchi Kiyohito’s miso warehouse. The grouping of three notes on the drumhead and three on the rim mimics what was found in that score, with slight variation.



⁵⁰ The performance seen in video clip “2-1-Suwa Ikazuchi” is from a performance by Osuwa Daiko at the 1985 Tsukuba World Expo. This performance was done in tandem by an Indian dancer. This is one of the few performances of this piece by Osuwa Daiko captured on video (extracted from a video in a private library, and used with permission). Upon reference of audio performances of “Suwa Ikazuchi,” it appears that there was little change made for the purposes of accompanying a dancer.

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However, there are some differences between the two. There is a dynamic contrast in the original *kagura* drumming that is not found in “Suwa Ikazuchi,” as in Oguchi’s composition everything is loud. At the same time, the rhythmic organization varies to some degree. It is unclear whether the triplet feel was the invention of Oguchi or the manner in which it was originally performed. However, the spacing between the notes is clear in the fragment, with all notes evenly spaced aside from the two notes at the beginning of each segment that are to be played “in succession.” This practice not found in “Suwa Ikazuchi.” The short-short-long element at the beginning of each segment in the discovered fragment has been replaced by a long-short-long motif. This not only fits well within a triple-based rhythmic feel, but also lends an air of swing to the music (fitting given Oguchi’s musical background and the swing band inspiration from which he drew when creating “Suwa Ikazuchi”). In essence, “Suwa Ikazuchi” retains echoes of the original *kagura* drumming rhythms, rearranged to fit a different musical palate.

The musical elements of “Suwa Ikazuchi” are enhanced by a series of choreographic movements. For example, as the first rhythmic variant is played on the taiko set (Figure 10 above), the *nagadō*-daiko players alternate playing and waving their hands in the air. One side of the stage plays while the other does the choreography, and then they switch roles. Later, during another variation, Oguchi emphasizes rhythmic breaks in the pattern by pointing his left hand up and right hand down in a manner so that the arms seem to form a single diagonal line (Figure 13).



Figure 13. Oguchi Daihachi posing during the second variant of "Suwa Ikazuchi"

"Nihon no Taiko" exhibition, World Expo, Tsukuba, Japan, 1985

Screenshot from a video from a private library.

This is echoed by the *nagadō-daiko* players, who also circle around the drums as they play; further, they again alternate their parts, so that one side of the stage play while the other moves, create a new composite rhythmic pattern (Figure 14).⁵¹

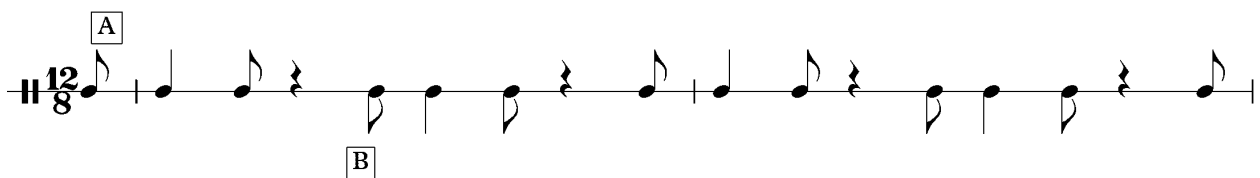


Figure 14. Second rhythm variant, as played by all performers

⁵¹ In this transcription, different stem directions indicate parts played by different performers (also indicated by the A & B part markings).

The alternating nature of such variations, in which performers alternate between playing the rhythm and performing an choreography, playing off of each other so that the rhythm is always performed, is spiritually connected to the manner in which the *kagura* drumming alternated between two players. The fact that some players performing the long-short part of the rhythm with the right hand could also be seen as a reference to the original source, played primarily with one hand.

After several variations of the rhythm, the drummers again beginning rolling, and the cycle begins anew: rolls, fundamental rhythm, variations. Each cycle is faster than the previous one, as if the players are working themselves into a frenzied state. Finally, after several repeats, the piece ends with loud rolls and a single hit.

“Suwa Ikazuchi” takes the basic musical ideas of the *kagura-daiko* fragment – rhythms that alternate between hitting the drumhead and the rim, rhythmic groups of three, alternating parts between two different players – and expands upon them. By increasing the number of drums and adding instruments such as the gong and conch shell, Oguchi created a sound that would be familiar to those accustomed to traditional festival music. Meanwhile, Oguchi integrated a rhythmic feel more common to Western swing music in an effort to appeal to developing musical tastes based on Western music rather than traditional Japanese performance arts. Further, the inclusion of choreographic elements added new visual interest to the performance, an element that was unnecessary when the music was simply accompaniment for a dance but was brought by Oguchi as part of a greater whole.

This new drumming style was warmly accepted by audiences, first at its banquet debut and then at a dedicatory performance at the Suwa Grand Shrine for the shrine’s Ofune Matsuri, where it was reported that “the thousands of local residents and spectators forgot about the

drawing out of the ship [that was the main event of the festival] and listened with rapt attention to the group” (Mogi 2009, 67). The group soon changed its name to Osuwa Daiko, drawing upon its connection to the Suwa Grand Shrine.⁵² Osuwa Daiko would quickly increase its fame as it performed at other local events, but it was in 1959 when it gained reputé on a larger level. That year, the group performed in the NHK National Song and Dance Festival at the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium in Sendagaya, Tokyo. This performance was broadcast across the nation, causing interest in the group to grow. Osuwa Daiko would be invited to perform at many other venues, culminating in an appearance in the opening ceremonies of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, in the “‘traditional performance arts’ section of the opening ceremonies” (Bender 2012, 209).⁵³ Building upon this exposure, the group also performed at the 1970 World’s Fair in Osaka. With these appearances, the new style of performance fostered by Oguchi Daihachi and Osuwa Daiko gained not only national but worldwide attention; as such, Osuwa Daiko helped to further the status of *wadaiko* as an intercultural art form, not necessarily in relation to the creation of music in but in terms of audience and the consumption of *wadaiko*.

2.3 “HIRYŪ SAN-DAN GAESHI” AND THE OSUWA DAIKO STYLE

In “Suwa Ikazuchi,” taiko were the focus of a performance. Certainly the drums had been used in many different musical genres in Japan as accompaniment for melodic instruments or voice, but

⁵² See section 4 of this chapter for a discussion of this name change.

⁵³ Of course, the inclusion of Osuwa Daiko in “traditional arts” is problematic, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

never before had they been the primary instruments. With the advent of Osuwa Daiko, a group composed primarily of drums and other percussion instruments came to be seen as a viable form of performance.

Oguchi continued to use the basic techniques developed during the creation of “Suwa Ikazuchi” when composing new pieces. The combination of high, middle, and low drums – *shime-daiko*, *nagadō-daiko*, and *ō-daiko* – remained at the core of the Osuwa Daiko sound: the *shime-daiko* plays the base rhythm and the *nagadō-daiko* the rhythmic melody, with the *ō-daiko* providing accents. This in turn would be enhanced by a gong and other metallic instruments, as well as the conch shell. Eventually, the Osuwa Daiko sound would be further enriched by an invention of Oguchi’s called the *tettō* (also known as the *tetsu-zutsu*, *zetto*, or *cannon* – Figure 15). Comprised of several pipes of different sizes welded together, with the largest in the middle, smallest on the left, and middle on the right (each with different pitches corresponding to the size of the pipe), the *tettō* allows the performer to create a metallic sound that pierces through the ensemble. It is often used in a role similar to the *shime-daiko*, mimicking that instrument as it provides the fundamental rhythm.



Figure 15. A *tettō* set up behind a *nagadō-daiko*

2009 North American Taiko Conference, Los Angeles, CA, August 8, 2009.

Photo by the author.

Beyond these fundamental instrumentation and orchestration techniques, Oguchi continued to add a visual element to performances, much as he did in “Suwa Ikazuchi.” Arm and body movements became part of the pieces, often synchronized in time into a well-crafted choreography. In many cases, the choreography cannot not be separated from the movements necessary to play the drums, thus from the rhythmic elements of the music; Osuwa Daiko performances are as much visual spectacles as they are aural ones. Oguchi also continued to add elements such as chanting, with many pieces opening with a chant.

A prime example of a piece integrating the different elements of Oguchi’s compositional style is “Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi” (“The Dragon God Descends Three Times,” often called simply

“Hiryū” by performers).⁵⁴ Composed for the 1970 Osaka World’s Fair, “Hiryū” was once stated by Oguchi to be the composition with which he was most pleased (Oguchi 1995, 14). It is named after the dragon god that is the *goshintai*, or object of worship, at the Suwa Grand Shrine. According to Oguchi’s grandson Yamamoto Makoto, the piece was based on a rhythmic pattern used at the shrine.⁵⁵

“Hiryū” opens with a brief interplay between the *fue* and taiko set players. In some performances this interplay simply consists of rolls on the taiko while the flute player improvises, while in other cases the two perform a melody with taiko accompaniment; in the latter case, the rhythm played on the *shime-daiko* is largely the same as the first few measures of the main rhythmic melody as performed by the *nagadō-daiko* players (Figure 16). As the *fue* and taiko player play, the rest of the ensemble kneels behind a number of *nagadō-daiko* setup at the front of the stage.



Figure 16. Opening *shime-daiko* pattern in one version of the opening of "Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi"

⁵⁴ “Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi” was composed by Oguchi Daihachi, founded of Osuwa Daiko. The inclusion of transcriptions of this work has been done with the expressed permission of the Osuwa Daiko executive office.

A 2007 performance of this piece at the Tokyo Kenbunroku Aoyama Gekijō, uploaded by a member of Osuwa Daiko, can be found on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNaVWB61-Ts> (accessed November 18, 2012). Further, the score for the piece was published in a 1994 *wadaiko* instruction guide. Osuwa Daiko Gakuen, *Nihon No Taiko* 日本の太鼓, 86-87.

⁵⁵ <http://www.hiryu-project.com/hiryu.html> (Accessed July 31, 2012)

After the *fue*/taiko introduction, the *nagadō-daiko* players begin to play on the *fuchi* (rim) of the drum, pointing their hands at the end of a multi-bar pattern in the same diagonal pattern that is used in “Suwa Ikazuchi” (00:37 in the YouTube video). After three repeats of this pattern (the first of many ‘threes’ in the piece), everyone stands, raises their arms up into the air, and yells “Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi.”⁵⁶ Following this announcement of the title of the piece, they then move into the playing position while yelling a *kiai*, or “spirited shout” (Endo 1999, 75). The main melodic section of “Hiryū” then begins, comprised of a series of short phrases (generally four measures each, with some exceptions; Figure 17 contains the first two patterns).

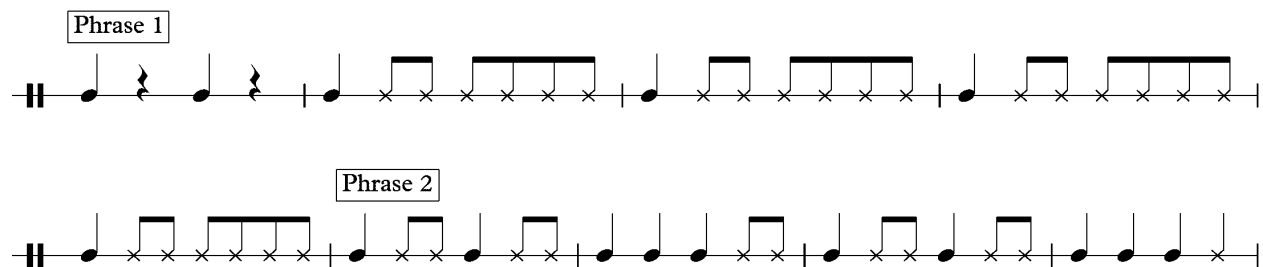


Figure 17. First two phrases of the main rhythmic melody of "Hiryū"

The rhythmic melody consists of interplay between hits on the drumhead and hit on the rim. Much like “Suwa Ikazuchi,” these rhythms are combined with different visual elements; one such choreographic movement features the circling of the arms down and back in a counter-clockwise motion away from the drum, ending with the arms pointed straight up. In another

⁵⁶ The announcement of composition title seems to be a common practice for Osuwa Daiko. If the title is not said outright before a performance, it is included with the chanting that is included in a piece.

instance, the group divides into two in the middle of the melody, playing alternating beats followed by the diagonal pose used earlier (Figure 18; 01:31 in the YouTube video).⁵⁷



Figure 18. Choreography during "Hiryū"

Tokyo Kenbunroku Aoyama Gekijō, Tokyo, Japan, 2007

Screenshot from a video shared by Osuwa Daiko on YouTube.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNaVWB61-Ts> (accessed November 18, 2012)

The dividing of the ensemble into multiple subgroups playing off of each other while integrating visuals to emphasize the split is a common practice in Osuwa Daiko's repertoire, beginning with "Suwa Ikazuchi." Not only does it add visual interest to a piece but it also adds sonic variety, with sounds coming from different locations within the ensemble. The group combines once again for the final phrase, which is ended by three hits on the rim while the group simultaneously yells "yo, so re," preparatory words that have no real meaning. They then raise

⁵⁷ This phrase is repeated three times, another appearance of the number three.

their arms into the air, and move their *bachi* (drumsticks) while chanting a short *norito* in time (Figure 19; 01:54 in the YouTube video).

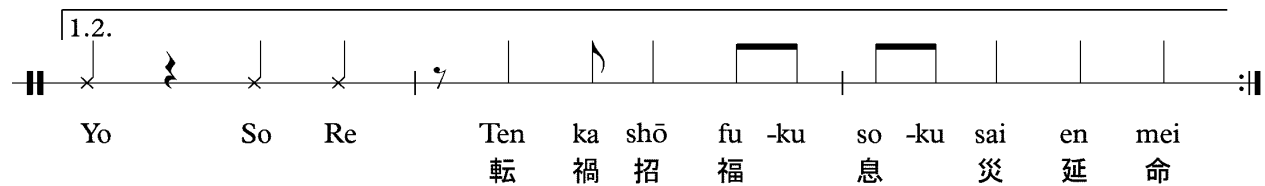


Figure 19. Final line of "Hiryū," first and second repeat

The chant translates as: “Out of disaster, bring us good luck, health, and long life”

Following the chant, the melody is repeated twice more, getting faster each time (in the same manner as “Suwa Ikazuchi”). The third time does not end with the chant, however, but rather with a brief pause; the drummers yell as they raise their arms into the air and end the piece with two loud hits. All together, the main rhythmic melody is performed three times, reflecting the dragon god descending three times, as referenced in the title.⁵⁸

“Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi” has much in common in “Suwa Ikazuchi”: the rhythmic melody consists of several short patterns repeated several times each, and this melody is repeated several times (each faster than the previous one). Choreographic elements are integrated into the performance so that the performance is both musically and visually interesting. “Hiryū” also

⁵⁸ According to Yamamoto, there was more to the piece that has now been lost:

“When "Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi" was filmed on NHK TV, the end of the piece was actually cut off from the video. Due to difficulties in editing at the time, shows were shot on very tight schedules. Osuwa Daiko performed their piece, but the program time ran out just at the moment where the piece now ends. When watching the video afterwards, Oguchi Sensei liked the look of it, and decided to change the ending of the piece that way.” (<http://www.hiryu-project.com/hiryu.html>, accessed July 31, 2012)

includes a *norito* like “Suwa Ikazuchi,” even though the chanting occurs at the end of each melodic repetition rather than at the beginning of the piece.

At the same time, however, “Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi” differs from “Suwa Ikazuchi” in that there is a more concrete organizational scheme within the work. Even though there are set rhythmic phrases in “Suwa Ikazuchi,” in performance the transitions between these phrases are often nebulous, as compared to the clearly-defined phrases of “Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi.” “Suwa Ikazuchi” has an almost improvisational feel, while “Hiryū” is a more set composition. This duality is one that Oguchi would continue in other pieces. “Isami Goma,” also composed in the 1960s, follows the same format as “Hiryū”: a rhythmic melody comprised of several lines, repeated many times. Meanwhile, another of Oguchi’s most well-known works, “Ashura,” is similar to “Suwa Ikazuchi” in that it is largely improvised and features less-concrete divisions within the work. Perhaps not coincidentally, “Suwa Ikazuchi” and “Ashura” both feature the taiko set, while “Hiryū” and “Isami Goma” do not. With Oguchi behind the taiko set, the pieces take on an improvisational air that draws from his experience playing drum set.

The performance style developed by Oguchi Daihachi would later come to be known as *kumidaiko*; the term was coined by Nishitsunoi Masahiro, scholar and director of the Japan National Theater and organizer of the “Nihon no Taiko” concert series that began in the 1970s. It received this name due to the fact that many drums are brought together into a single group (“kumi” means “set,” or “group,” in Japanese). However, Oguchi’s influence did not stop at the music and performance practices that he developed. He impacted the intercultural nature of *wadaiko* not only in terms of the musical influences he brought into his music, but also in helping to create groups in other countries, including the United States. Indeed, in the late-1960s he taught Tanaka Seiichi, who founded the San Francisco Taiko Dojo (discussed in Chapter 5).

Meanwhile, in 1986, Oguchi Daihachi helped to establish St. Louis Osuwa Daiko, donating drums to the group and working with them as part of a sister city relationship between St. Louis and Suwa.⁵⁹ At the same time, however, the discourses that developed around his new performance style would prove to be just as influential.

2.4 OSUWA DAIKO: THE SUCCESSORS OF TRADITION

Oguchi Daihachi routinely opened compositions with a chant; indeed, his gravelly voice chanting while a *horagai* or taiko was being played became as much a part of the Osuwa Daiko sound as the aural spectacle of many taiko being played at the same time. However, this inclusion of chants was not simply for show, or to add a vocal element to an otherwise entirely instrumental performance. It was deeply connected to Oguchi's perception of Osuwa Daiko's position as successor of the *kagura-daiko* that had been passed down in the Lake Suwa area.

Osuwa Daiko, as mentioned earlier, was originally called the Suwa Daiko Hozonkai. *Hozonkai*, or "preservation societies," are local organizations dedicated to the transmission and performance of a regional folk art, making sure that the performance of an art form "is carried out each year (or whatever its particular schedule) and that it gets passed along to future generations" (Thornbury 1994, 219). In the case of the Suwa Daiko Hozonkai, it was formed to revive and maintain the *kagura-daiko* of which a fragment was discovered. This concept of

⁵⁹ <http://www.stltaiko.com/aboutus.php> (Accessed November 9, 2012)

“revival” would be a prominent discussion point in early articles about the group, which often highlighted “the revival of this native folk activity ‘Suwa Taiko’” (Mogi 2009, 65).⁶⁰

This discourse of a revival of a local drumming tradition would continue to be used even after the name of the group was changed to Osuwa Daiko and the emphasis was placed on Oguchi’s original compositions. Even as they performed original compositions at this festival, with the improvisational nature of their early activities evolving into concrete forms, Oguchi maintained the perception that what they were performing was the revival of a once-lost local drumming tradition. There was a deep belief amongst Oguchi and the other members of Osuwa Daiko concerning the ties their performances had to the local traditions; Mogi muses that perhaps “even the attachment of the name ‘hozonkai’ from the beginning of activities and the insistence upon the legitimate inheritance of Suwa traditions is perhaps due to the deep impression on all founding members of the folk belief that tied together the gods and taiko” (Mogi 2009, 69).⁶¹

The connections that Osuwa Daiko had to Shinto practices were not just a matter of discourse, but can also be found within performance practices. During performances by the group, a *gohei*, or paper offering to the gods, is attached to a taiko at the center of the stage; this drum would either be part of the taiko set or amongst those played by the other members of the group people.⁶² At the same time, the various *norito* chanted during many Osuwa Daiko pieces – including “Suwa Ikazuchi” and “Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi” – help to lend performances an air of

⁶⁰ The Japanese word used in this article is “*fukkatsu*,” which means “revival” or “restoration.”

⁶¹ Within Shinto, taiko have been considered to be vessels for the gods, and the only instrument that can speak to the gods; hence, their prominence in Shinto ritual.

⁶² A *gohei* can be seen attached to Oguchi’s taiko set as seen in Figure 3.

ritual, as do the poses taken while chanting. As a whole, these elements helped to give performances by Osuwa Daiko a visual sense of connection to Shinto ritual.

Even the name “Osuwa Daiko” itself is part of the maintenance of a connection to Shinto rite. With the group originally being called the Suwa Daiko Hozonkai, the name Osuwa Daiko did not appear until after a dedicatory performance at Suwa Shrine, one of the oldest shrines in Japan and head shrine for the Suwa network of shrines across Japan.⁶³ As he conducted archival research and conducted interviews about the beginnings of Osuwa Daiko, Mogi noted that it appeared that “no one in particular attached [the name], but rather it just happened on its own” (Mogi 2009, 67).

The association with the Suwa Grand Shrine was an important part of Osuwa Daiko’s development. Oguchi routinely used elements from the shrine as inspiration for compositions (as in “Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi”); further, and perhaps more importantly, the group would give six dedicatory performances a year at the shrine (Oguchi 1995, 14). These shrine performances were in the eyes of Oguchi the most important of part Osuwa Daiko’s activities; in a 1995 interview, he would cite them as an example of how his group differed from those *wadaiko* groups that came afterwards (Oguchi 1995). Unlike later groups that performed primarily on concert hall stages, the majority of Osuwa Daiko’s performances were on shrine grounds at festivals, both in the Lake Suwa region and at other shrines to which they had been invited. The performance of Osuwa Daiko’s original compositions was not, in Oguchi’s eyes, simply a mere musical presentation, but an offering to the gods, an extension of the rituals that takes place during Shinto festivals.

⁶³ <http://suwataisha.or.jp/> (accessed August 1, 2012)

Beyond these connections to the Suwa Grand Shrine and Shinto ritual, Oguchi would go to other lengths to position Osuwa Daiko as the successors of a regional drumming tradition. For example, he linked his group and his music to the war drums of Takeda Shingen, a 16th century warlord active in the area that is now Nagano Prefecture.⁶⁴ According to one tale in old Osuwa Daiko pamphlets, the music performed by the group was side-stage music at the Suwa Grand Shrine organized into war drumming by Takeda in the 16th Century (Mogi 2010). In time, this story would be told almost as often as the story of the discovered *kagura-daiko* fragment. It's hard to separate fact from fiction in regards to this story; as Mogi writes, "there's no proof that it was the war music of Takeda's army, but there's also no proof that it wasn't" (Mogi 2010, 79). Nevertheless, as a story of sorts it proved to be interesting and would become a crucial part of the discourse surrounding the group.

This story, combined with the one about the music fragment in the miso warehouse and the associations that the group built up with the Suwa Grand Shrine, helped to establish a perception of Osuwa Daiko as the successors of a regional folk drumming practice. Such a perception was fueled by group members' own belief in it; even as Oguchi composed new works, he continued to believe that the music he was performing was a revival of the Suwa Grand Shrine *kagura-daiko*.⁶⁵ The continued activity of Osuwa Daiko, in turn, was "the

⁶⁴ This area was once called Shinano Prefecture, or *Shinano no kuni*. Beyond still being used in the names of local newspapers and other venues, this term appears often in Osuwa Daiko-related items; for example, the group had at one time "Shinano no kuni" printed on their *happi* coats.

⁶⁵ It is important to note here that in interviews and writings, Oguchi uses the verb "compose" – *sakkyoku* – to refer to the act of creating works for Osuwa Daiko. Given that this word is used in association with the creation of a new work – as compared to "arrange" (*henkyoku*) – there is no question that he saw the works he created for

restoration of traditions that still lived within the areas of the people of Suwa” (Oguchi 1987, 31).⁶⁶ The music that Oguchi was creating – with the new usage of taiko in a group setting, and orchestration techniques borrowed from Western bands – was subservient to the context in which the music was performed; elements like cloth offerings to the gods attached to drums and the raising of arms into air while chanting at the beginning of performances were used to build an atmosphere of ritual and sacred association.

As he was creating the performance style of *kumidaiko*, then, Oguchi was also creating a discourse that would accompany it as it spread. Building upon attention gained through performances at national events and on NHK, Oguchi was asked to assist in the creation of groups in other areas of Japan; all the while, he continued to refine and spread the discourse of *wadaiko* as “traditional.” Mogi notes that as Oguchi helped to create new groups, he would make use of the local history; for example, “if it is a place that suffered from a drought, then the group would be wrapped in the story of a revival of taiko played during a rain ceremony; if there is history of famine, then taiko was used to combat it riotously” (Mogi 2010, 78). The creation of a discourse of tradition utilized by Oguchi for *Osuwa Daiko* was used in other settings, thus further its spread (including books and articles about the group). It even spread overseas, as he helped to establish ensembles in other countries; in his 1987 book “Tenko,” he lists 197 groups in Japan

Osuwa Daiko as new compositions. Nor does he use the verb “revive” (*fukkatsu*) in this context; he does use it in reference to more general *Osuwa Daiko* activities, however.

⁶⁶ Oguchi uses the word “*yomigaeru*” in this instance, which literally means “to come back to life again” or “to be brought back to life.”

and abroad that he helped found or had held workshops for, as well as eight in the United States (Oguchi 1987, 307-14).⁶⁷

One other element that plays a part in this discourse of tradition is the performance style developed by Osuwa Daiko, including Oguchi's compositional style. Even as he continued to refine the way that he wrote new pieces, Oguchi's compositions remained fairly simplistic; they generally consisted of a melody that is repeated several times, with the melody itself comprised of several lines that may be repeated over and over again. This has much in common with *matsuri-bayashi* (Japanese festival music), thus continuing a musical tie to past traditions, but more importantly people can perform it with little to no musical training. Oguchi was long a proponent of amateur involvement in the new art form he was creating. While this can be viewed through the perspective of looking to spread it to as many people as possible, it also follows a general tenant of festival music performance. In general, the music at festivals across Japan is performed not by professional musicians, but by amateurs who come together for the expressed purpose of performing at a festival. From this perspective, then, the Osuwa Daiko performance style is a spiritual successor to the participatory environment fostered within festival performance.

Even as Oguchi built up the relationship between contemporary performance style and historically-linked ritualistic, visual, and community-based elements, outside forces also played a part in this development. The selection of Osuwa Daiko for participation in events like the NHK National Song and Dance Festival and the Opening Ceremonies of the Tokyo Olympics, where the group performed alongside regional folk art performance troupes, helped to foster a discourse

⁶⁷ See Chapter 8 for a further discussion of the intercultural impact of Oguchi's discourse of tradition.

of *wadaiko* as traditional.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, the group routinely appeared on NHK television programs like “Nihon no Dentō” (“Traditions of Japan”), programs meant to introduce viewers to traditional folk arts from across the nation.⁶⁹

Nishitsunoi Masahiro’s coining of the word *kumidaiko* – mentioned earlier in this chapter – also became tied to these emergent discourses of “tradition.” Osuwa Daiko was one of the first groups to embrace this classification; indeed, Nishitsunoi’s writings have been heavily promoted in writings by Oguchi, Osuwa Daiko, and the Nihon Taiko Federation that was co-founded by Oguchi.⁷⁰ In the 1970s, Nishitsunoi – then affiliated with the National Theater in Tokyo – set out to have groups like Osuwa Daiko included in a folk performance series at the theater (Bender 2012, 177). In an attempt to convince theater officials that *wadaiko* could be presented alongside arts that were founded prior to World War II, he created a typology of Japanese drumming that

⁶⁸ The presentation of folk arts at such international events is not without its own set of issues. This topic has been heavily discussed in recent years, often within the realm of “cultural rights,” examining how music is utilized, who has the right to access, use, and represent various aspects of a culture, and similar concepts. However, *wadaiko* has largely not been a part of these conversations.

⁶⁹ Of course, performances at international events like the Tokyo Olympics are often as much political events as they are musical, having as much to do with nation-building and social struggles as with the actual art. In the case of the Tokyo Olympics, it was Japan’s reentry onto the world stage. The presentation of a strong vibrant musical genre like *wadaiko* would help to foster an image of a strong, vibrant Japan (This way of thinking would have a particular impact on the development of Ondekoza, discussed in Chapter 4).

For this reason, perhaps, Osuwa Daiko would participate in almost every major international event that took place in Japan after the Tokyo Olympics: the 1970s Osaka World’s Fair, the 1985 Tsukuba World Expo, and the 1995 Nagano Olympics, just to name a few.

⁷⁰ His typology chart has been included in numerous publications by these organizations.

included Oguchi's new drumming style.⁷¹ This system established *kumidaiko* as a new form of performance; Nishitsunoi created the word to specifically refer to Osuwa Daiko – as simply another branch of folk drumming, albeit one more complicated in terms of construction and performance practices. Theater officials accepted this argument, and in 1977 the yearly “Nihon no Taiko” (“Japanese Taiko”) concert series began. Osuwa Daiko was and continues to be a featured performer at many of these concerts. This concert series features performers from across Japan playing musical styles from various parts of the country. Of course, as has been demonstrated in this chapter, *wadaiko* occupies a nebulous position in this setting, given the intercultural nature of the music, but at the same time the participation of Osuwa Daiko and other *wadaiko* groups in this concert fits well with the discourse of tradition championed by Oguchi.

Through a combination of outside actions and the discourses evoked by Oguchi and Osuwa Daiko members, the group came to become seen as inheritors of a regional drumming tradition, even as the group performed original compositions and utilized performance practices that had no precedent in regional folk drumming of the Lake Suwa region. Osuwa Daiko, and the various practices utilized by the group, was the beginning of *wadaiko*, a new musical genre in which taiko were the primary instrument and melded Japanese traditions with non-Japanese – particularly Western/American – influences that had been coming into Japan since the re-opening of the country to the world in the mid-1800s.

⁷¹ The argument against *wadaiko*'s inclusion in this series based on age is related to long-standing discourses in East Asia. History is a large factor in the establishment of “traditional-ness” in the region. See Robert C. Provine, “History as an Essential Concept in East Asian Music,” in *Proceedings of the 9th International Asian Music Conference: Musical Culture of Korea, China and Japan* (Seoul: Asian Music Research Institute, Seoul National University, 2007).

Beyond performances on NHK and at Olympic ceremonies, one performance that helped cement Osuwa Daiko's presence in the public limelight took place at 1985 Tsukuba World Expo. The group performed as part of an over four hour long-exhibition entitled "Nihon no Taiko." "Ashura" was performed primarily as duet between Oguchi on taiko set and jazz drummer George Kawaguchi. Meanwhile, a performance of "Suwa Ikazuchi" was accompanied by Indian dancer Shakti.⁷² However, in this exhibition Osuwa Daiko was not the only *wadaiko* group. Performances were split between folk drumming troupes and new *wadaiko* groups that had emerged in the three decades since Osuwa Daiko began activities. Once again, on the international stage, *wadaiko* was placed on equal footing with folk drumming.

And yet, not every group at the "Nihon no Taiko" exhibition fell within the Osuwa Daiko mold. Two groups present, Sukeroku Daiko and Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, were successors of a group that emerged out of a performance tradition from Tokyo much different from that from which Oguchi drew from. This group, Sukeroku Taiko, not only had a different performance style than Osuwa Daiko, but a different approach to the art form. They were the first professional *wadaiko* group, performing in cabarets, clubs, and anywhere else that would hire them.

⁷² One of the major activities pursued by Oguchi beginning in the late 1970s was collaboration with artists from various disciplines. The "Ashura" duet with George Kawaguchi in particular would be presented a number of times, including at the 1996 20th Anniversary "Nihon no Taiko" concert.

3.0 SUKEROKU TAIKO: BLENDING FOLK & CLASSICAL DRUMMING FOR A PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

For many, one of the highlights of the bi-annual North American Taiko Conference (NATC) is the free-for-all jam session that occurs on the first evening of the conference. All attendees are invited to participate in an extended free improvisation period, a time to drum spontaneously with others before the weekend of intensive – and often exhausting – workshops begins. At the 2011 NATC opening jam, over a dozen *nagadō-daiko* were placed on the stage atop stands known as *naname* stands, a quasi-X-shaped stand with the drum placed on it in such a way that the barrel-like taiko rests at an approximately 45 degree angle. Participants were asked to come up to the stage in phases according to experience level, so that there were not more people than instruments (and even then, many performers were often left waiting for a turn on the drums). For the first few experience levels, the jam consisted of dozens of players all playing at the same time, creating a colophony of sound that resonated in the all-purpose room that was the site of the event. By the time the jam reached the 21-30 years’ experience level, however, only a dozen drummers were on stage, and each was given a moment to shine.

The transition to this experience level was accompanied by a change in the instrument setup. An *ō-daiko* on a tall stand, placing the drum horizontally at approximately eye level, was brought out from the stage wings and positioned at a slight angle in the center of the stage. One *nagadō-daiko* on a *naname* slanted stand was then placed so that it was facing the *ō-daiko*, a

setup that allowed one to play both drums at once if desired. The drummers then began to take full advantage of this new variation, integrating a variety of choreographed movements hereto unseen during the jam. Some moved back and forth between different playing positions, from facing the audience to standing with their backs to their audience and back again, all the while playing rhythms divided between the *ō-daiko* and the *nagadō-daiko*. The audience cheered the drummers' every move as they became more daring, some beginning to twirl their drumsticks and jump into the air as they moved between the drums.

Once the 21-30 years' experience group was finished, it was time for the group with more than thirty years of experience. The first drummer was visiting the conference from Japan, an older gentleman with a Hawaiian flower *lei* hanging around his neck. With several beats on the *nagadō-daiko*, he signaled for the end of the rhythmic ostinato that had been playing throughout the previous groups' time. He then gave a yell, manipulating his voice in a manner known within *hōgaku* – Japanese classical music – as *kakegoe*. After a few sparse hits, he began to solo. Playing only the *nagadō-daiko*, he mixed hitting the drumhead and rim with various arm movements – pointing, circles, etc. – that, while not as bold as those used by the younger players, certainly captured the audience's attention (Figure 20).



**Figure 20. Mochizuki Saburo playing a *nagadō-daiko*/*ō-daiko* setup at the 2011 NATC opening jam session
Mountain View Buddhist Temple, Mountain View, CA. August 18, 2011
Photo by the author**

This drummer's name was Ishizuka Yutaka, better known within the *wadaiko* world by the name Mochizuki Saburo, his *hōgaku natori* (*hōgaku* professional name).⁷³ Even if some members of the audience may not have known who he was, they were certainly familiar with the style of playing he was demonstrating for them. Mochizuki is one of the pioneers of the slant stand-based performance style that was utilized during the jam session, as well as having developed the performance style integrating the *nagadō-daiko* and the *ō-daiko* that had been first demonstrated by the 21-30-year experience group. This style of performance is called by some –

⁷³ A *natori* is a professional name given to performers of Japanese classical music, awarded when the performer is recognized as having achieved a high-enough skill level and status with their chosen instrument. The family name is the name of the school to which the performer belongs. See William P. Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments: The New Edition* (New York: Kodansha America, Inc., 2000), 201-02..

especially by performers in Japan – the Sukeroku-*ryū*, or Sukeroku style of drumming.⁷⁴ It was developed in the 1960s by a group called Sukeroku Taiko, the first professional *wadaiko* group in Tokyo (and of which Mochizuki was a founding member). The Sukeroku performance style is an evolution of the festival drumming of the *Shitamachi* area of Tokyo, particularly utilizing elements from the drumming that took place during Obon known as *bon daiko*, as well as the *Shitamachi* festival music known as *Edo-bayashi*.⁷⁵ However, it also includes elements taken from *hōgaku*, particularly from theatrical performance arts like Noh and kabuki.

Just as Oguchi Daihachi did with the festival drumming from around Lake Suwa, Sukeroku Taiko members took local festival drumming styles and arranged them for a contemporary performance environment. However, *bon daiko* is more soloistic in its approach, owing to the rise of drumming competitions in the late 1950s and early 1960s, resulting in a much more free performance style than that created by Oguchi, not to mention a completely different visual aspect owing to unique developments amongst performers in Tokyo at that time. At the same time, the complex nature of *Edo-bayashi* and the inclusion of elements taken from classical drumming brought with them a wide range of techniques and compositional styles from which Sukeroku Taiko members could draw. In a further difference from Osuwa Daiko, while Oguchi emphasized the relationship his group and music had with Shinto shrines and sacred

⁷⁴ The use of the term *ryū* in this instance is of particular significance, as it is related to a transmission/lineage system in Japan called *iemoto*. This term – and the implications of its use within the world of *wadaiko* – will be further discussed in Chapter 8.

⁷⁵ The *Shitamachi* area of Tokyo includes wards such as Adachi and Taito – generally, the area around the Sumida River in the eastern part of the city. See the maps in Appendices B.3 and B.4.

See the following sections for more on these performance styles.

environments, the music and performance style of Sukeroku Taiko was developed for cabarets and clubs. The result was a style of performance that was more entertainment than ritual, secular rather than sacred.⁷⁶

3.1 POST-WAR *BON DAIKO* IN *SHITAMACHI* TOKYO

The development of the Sukeroku performance style began during Obon celebrations in post-war Tokyo. One of the largest festivals in Japan, taking place in late summer, Obon is a Buddhist festival held in celebration of the time when it is believed that the spirits of the dead return to their homes.⁷⁷ People return to the ancestral homes of their families to clean the graves of their ancestors and leave offerings; at night, there are celebrations, primarily involving dancing called *bon odori*. *Bon odori* typically occur in a circle around a tower called a *yagura*; at larger venues, the *yagura* may have ropes streaming from it holding lanterns (Figure 21). Dances primarily involve choreographed hand gestures that occur as the dancers move to the beat around the

⁷⁶ Much like the previous chapter, this chapter owes much to the writings of Shawn Bender, who was one of the first to discuss the history of Sukeroku Taiko. However, as was the case with Osuwa Daiko, as discussed in the previous chapter, the Japanese-language sources cited by Bender include information not available in Bender's writings; for example, Mogi Hitoshi includes extended direct quotations of archival sources (such as full newspaper articles from regional newspapers). In these cases, I have chosen to cite Mogi rather than Bender, even if there is an overlap in information presented by the two authors.

Further, I am greatly indebted to the discussion of Sukeroku Taiko's history in Kenny Endo's 1999 master's thesis.

⁷⁷ The timing of Obon celebrations varies across Japan, but they generally occur in the end of July and beginning of August.

circle. At some *bon odori*, the *yagura* will be multi-tiered, with a small group of dancers positioned on the first level so that they can serve as models and be seen by all the other dancers in attendance.



Figure 21. *Bon odori*, with a drummer on a *yagura* in the background

Tsukiji Hongan-ji Bon Odori, Tsukiji, Tokyo. August 7, 2008

Photo by the author.

Bon odori are typically danced to various types of folk songs, with much of the repertoire dating to the Edo period (1603-1868). The standard orchestration for these songs is a vocalist accompanied by flute, shamisen, and taiko; the drumming itself is known as *bon daiko*.⁷⁸ The tempo is generally a walking pace, so that the dancers can move around the tower without

⁷⁸ Modern *enka* or pop songs that are used in *bon odori* are often arranged to suit this orchestration.

feeling rushed.⁷⁹ Quite often, the rhythms have a slight lilt akin to what is called swing in the West (that is, a triplet-based pattern), although it is rather simplistic to call it a swing rhythm, as it is not a strict division of a beat into three; further, some songs may contain both swing and straight rhythms, dependent upon the performers.⁸⁰

In the past, the singer and instrumentalists would stand on the top level of the *yagura* while the dancers circle around them; however, the musicians began to disappear in the post-war era, replaced by tape recordings. Bender mentions speculation by some that this was because the singing and playing could no longer be done proficiently (Bender 2012, 53). And yet, the taiko continues to be played even as the other instruments have disappeared, perhaps due to sacred notions associated with the drum (discussed in the previous chapter). As a result, the taiko often serves as the centerpiece of a *bon odori*, with drummers taking turns as they accompany the various songs played via recording (Figure 22, and seen in video clip “3-2-bon daiko”).

⁷⁹ See video clip “3-1-Bon odori” for an example of *bon odori* in Tokyo, recorded by the author at the Tsukiji Hongan-ji Bon Odori, Tsukiji, Tokyo, August 7, 2008.

⁸⁰ According to *wadaiko* performer Kageyama Isaku, rather than dealing with the English terms of swing or straight, the rhythmic feel of *bon daiko* is sometimes conceptualized using the Japanese terms *hane* (literally, “jumping”), as compared to a heavy feel (*omoi*), or a ‘sticky’ feel (*nebaru*; “to stick”). Personal communication, August 13, 2012.



Figure 22. A drummer playing the taiko on top of a *yagura*

Tsukiji Honganji Bon Odori, Tsukiji Honganji, Tsukiji, Tokyo. August 7, 2008

Photo by the author.

The rhythms performed within *bon daiko* are largely improvised, although there are restrictions regarding the degree to which the drummer can experiment, as they must match the recording; even if the drumming is a visual centerpiece, it is still accompaniment to the singing. A trademark of *bon daiko* drumming is the consistent presence of a short, two-beat rhythm played on the 3rd and 4th beats of a measure (Figure 23). As the drummer improvises, they will routinely return to this rhythm, typically playing it on the rim. As such, it serves as a centering point – it is rare for one to go more than 2 measures without playing this rhythm. The importance of this rhythm is further accented by the fact that at many *bon odori* there is a player repeatedly playing this rhythm on the *atarigane*, a handheld gong that serves as timekeeper as the taiko soloist explores different rhythmic possibilities.



Figure 23. The standard *bon daiko* rhythm

In post-war Tokyo, *bon odori* often served as social events at which an entire community gathered. Given the prominence of the drummer at these events, playing the taiko on the *yagura* was seen as a way to gain attention, becoming particularly popular among young men. Mogi writes that “the taiko player would without any preplanning invent interesting phrases and fine-looking movements and try to stick out as much as possible” (Mogi 2010, 34). As they improved, drummers would look to perform not only at their local *bon odori* but at other ones within Tokyo as well.

Eventually, the prominence of the drummers at *bon odori* in the *Shitamachi* area of Tokyo reached the point that *bon daiko* competitions were held. In 1962, the first annual “Bon Daiko Contest” was held at the Yushima Tenjin Shrine in central Tokyo. The winner was Kobayashi Seido, an 18 year old who had been playing at *bon odori* since he was 12 (Mogi 2010).⁸¹ As Kobayashi participated in this and other competitions, he became friends with a small group of young men, including Ishizuka Yutaka (the aforementioned Mochizuki Saburo), Onozato Ganei, and Ishikura Yoshihisa. Together with several other like-minded acquaintances, they joined a *bon odori* appreciation society called the “Oedo Sukeroku Kai,” founded by Kobayashi’s older brother Seiko and named after the kabuki character Sukeroku (Mogi 2010, 35). As described by Bender, “the emphasis of the group was on what these members described as ‘free solo’ or ‘freestyle’: building on the basic rhythm common to all kinds of *Bon daiko* by

⁸¹ Kobayashi won the competition again in 1964.

adding one's own mallet twirls and acrobatic movements" (Bender 2012, 56).⁸² Together with the slanted stands commonly used by members of the group called *naname* stands (and others playing in *bon odori* in the *Shitamachi* area – see Figure 24), this began to form the foundations of what would become the Sukeroku style.



**Figure 24. Drummers playing a *nagado-daiko* placed on a slanted *naname* stand
Tsukiji Honganji Bon Odori, Tsukiji Honganji temple, Tsukiji, Tokyo. August 7, 2008
Photo by the author.**

⁸² The difference between *bon daiko* and *Bon daiko* – a capitalization of the phrase seen in quotations used in this paragraph – is merely that of transliterative choice. I have chosen to use a non-capitalized phrase; however, I have kept the choices of those authors that I quote.

3.2 SHIN ON TAIKO AND THE BEGINNING OF PROFESSIONAL WADAIKO IN TOKYO

In December of 1966, Ishizuka Yutaka saw an advertisement in The Tokyo Shimbun newspaper calling for young people join what was called a “Japanese taiko youth group.” The ad was placed by Sanada Minoru, a dancer in charge of performances at a club called the Crown, in the Ginza area of Tokyo. Having been struck by a samba performance while touring South America, he wanted to “pull out the essence from the shell of tradition and create something that would communicate to the modern era,” and “create an art that could represent Japan and perform it around the world” (Mogi 2010, 35). To some degree, he wanted to create for his club something similar to the percussion-heavy samba that one could see in Brazil, both visually exciting and musically interesting.⁸³

Ishizuka answered Sanada’s advertisement and was chosen to perform as a solo drummer in a dance show at the Crown. Soon after, with Sanada’s blessing he invited Kobayashi Seido, Onozato Ganei, and Ishikura Yoshihisa to join him. The group began practicing at the Crown, molding the performance style they had developed in *bon daiko* performances and competitions into something suitable for a club stage. In addition to Sanada’s direction, their musical growth was guided by Kineya Sasazou, a musician from the National Theater in charge of *hōgaku* drumming at that venue; as “Sanada could not offer guidance for real taiko performance, he

⁸³ It is unclear whether Sanada had any knowledge of Osuwa Daiko, and whether performances by Oguchi’s group at the 1964 Olympics and other national events had any impact on his decision to begin this activity.

searched for and asked for the help” (Mogi 2010, 36).⁸⁴ Kineya’s lessons were essential to the creation of what would become known as the Sukeroku style. In his article on the origins of the Sukeroku performance style, Mogi wrote the following about this process: “those who had taught themselves to that point went beyond the unconventional charm acquired in *bon daiko*; their playing style, tone, and rhythms acquired the beauty of ancient Japanese orderliness” (Mogi 2010).

Following three months of lessons and rehearsals, the group debuted at the Crown as Shin On Taiko (“New Sound Taiko”). They quickly gained in popularity, with an article about the group appearing in a mid-1967 issue of The Tokyo Shimbun. Shin On Taiko was soon recruited to perform at other clubs and cabarets in the Ginza area as well. In early performances, the group performed alongside Sanada on shamisen in one of his original compositions called “Hounen.” However, they also composed original works for taiko alone. One of the earliest pieces to emerge was entitled “Midare Uchi.”⁸⁵

⁸⁴ *Hōgaku* is the music of Japanese classical drumming, particularly theatrical forms like *kabuki* and *noh*. See section 4.2 for a more detailed discussion of this musical genre.

⁸⁵ Composition dates for many Sukeroku Taiko pieces are unclear, owing to conflicting dates given by original members about activities at this time. For example, in interviews with Kenny Endo Mochizuki gives the formation date of Shin On Taiko as being in 1962 or 1963, Onozato Ganei as 1965 or 1966, and the other original members are unsure. Endo, “Yodan Uchi: A Contemporary Composition for Taiko,” 16-17.

Given Mogi’s inclusion of newspaper articles with confirmed dates in his articles, not strictly relying on personal recollection, I have chosen to follow his dating scheme in establishing a chronology of events.

3.2.1 “Midare Uchi”

At its heart, “Midare Uchi” (literally, “random pounding”) is not far removed from the *bon daiko* through which the members of Shin On Taiko had begun to hone their skills. Later liner notes written about the piece describe it in the following manner: “Each player in succession executes his own solo improvisations on a gradually quicker tempo of a two-beat rhythm peculiar to *bon daiko*, the music which accompanies Bon odori, the mid-summer ritual dance in memory of ancestors” (Oedo Sukeroku Taiko 2004). Many of the rhythms used within *bon daiko* are present in “Midare Uchi,” as are the visual flairs that first emerged during *bon daiko* competitions in the Tokyo *Shitamachi* area.

A typical performance begins with the first soloist yelling “Midare Uchi,” announcing the work to be performed. He (or she) stands beside a drum on a *naname* stand that has been set in the center of the stage; another player stands opposite of them at the other end of the drum with their backs partially to the audience, ready to accompany the soloist on the body of the drum.⁸⁶ Depending on the amount of players in a group, other drummers may be accompanying the soloist on *ō-daiko*, *nagadō-daiko*, or *atarigane*. The soloist hits twice loudly, with some space in between for dramatic effect, and then the rest of the group joins in with the *bon daiko* rhythm discussed above as the soloist begins their solo. The rhythms played by the soloist are typically not very complicated, not straying far from its *bon daiko* roots; rather, an increased emphasis is placed on the visual nature of the solo. Soloists will point their drumsticks towards the audience,

⁸⁶ In a Sukeroku-influenced group, the drum typically has a patch of skin attached to the body so that the wood will not be damaged.

or move one or both arms in circles, or jump in the air. It is also not uncommon for the soloist to switch to the other side of the drum and back again.⁸⁷

Each player's improvisation starts at a slow, even pace, but about halfway through begin to get faster, increasing to the point that everyone can do nothing but play a roll. After a brief pause, the soloist begins again at a slightly slower tempo than what they had previously started with. This time, however, they slow down until eventually cueing everyone in the ensemble to play a certain rhythm. The soloist takes a quick bow, and then the piece continues with a new soloist; this pattern is repeated until everyone in the ensemble has had a chance at the center of the stage.

In "Midare Uchi," soloists are free of the restrictions placed upon them when accompanying *bon odori*. They are not on a *yagura*, so they have more room to move around, thus an increased emphasis on visuals. Their patterns are not limited by the rhythms or phrasing of the *ondo*, so they can be freer within their rhythmic choices. Further, as the performance is free of dancers the group can manipulate the tempo. Mochizuki Saburo calls "Midare Uchi" "the basis of the Sukeroku style," and through its performance, the *bon daiko* performance developed in post-war Tokyo was eventually spread around the world (personal communication, December 2012).

⁸⁷ See video clip "3-3-Midare Uchi" for an excerpt of Sukeroku Taiko founding member Kobayashi Seido's solo improvisation during a 2004 performance of "Midare Uchi" by his group Oedo Sukeroku Taiko.

Excerpt from Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, *Les Tambours De Tokyo Live*, (Sunset France, 2004), DVD, PS69004.

3.3 FROM SHIN ON TAIKO TO SUKEROKU TAIKO

Despite Shin On Taiko's popularity, the group was not particularly successful from a financial standpoint. Indeed, as a result of steady losses – due to the cost of buying drums and paying Kineya Sasazou for lessons – the group folded within a year. However, Kineya's son Kowase Susumu soon stepped in. Believing that a taiko group could be financially successful with the proper direction, and drawing upon business connections that he had built up, he invited the former members of Shin On Taiko to join a new group, which they named Sukeroku Taiko (after the *bon daiko* group of which they had all been members). Like Shin On Taiko, Sukeroku Taiko's primary performance venues were clubs and cabarets.

At Kowase's suggestion, the group soon changed its name to the “Yushima Tenjin Taiko Hozonkai Sukeroku Daiko Group;” Mogi suggests that because “taiko was thought to accompany festivals and events, perhaps they wanted to make clear their past and aimed to gain prestige” (Mogi 2010, 38). Much as Oguchi Daihachi did when he named the group after the Suwa Grand Shrine, Kowase looked to tie the group to the *bon daiko* competitions at the Yushima Tenjin shrine where the members had gained some fame. As part of the agreement for using the name, the group would perform at shrine events. However, unlike Osuwa Daiko the majority of Sukeroku Taiko performances were in secular settings, and shrine members objected to this relationship. Thus, the group soon changed its name back to Sukeroku Taiko.

This brief naming experiment highlights the troubles that early *wadaiko* groups had when dealing with perceived expectations of *wadaiko* performance. The members of Sukeroku Taiko were working as professional musicians, typically getting paid for their performances. Unlike Oguchi and Osuwa Daiko, there was no particular link with a local community or shrine. Invoking that association might result in assumptions that would be made about the type of

music they could – or should – perform. Of course, Osuwa Daiko’s activities were starting to be known on a national level by this time, thanks to performances on NHK and at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, but a performance style in which taiko were the main instruments – and a group of many taiko at that – was still uncommon. In the late 1960s, the expectation was still for a small amount of taiko to be used as part of a larger ensemble, as accompaniment rather than the featured instrument.

Sukeroku Taiko fought this expectation as they continued to create new compositions meant for performance in clubs and cabarets, entertainment that was secular rather than sacred. At the same time, however, they continued to draw from the musical traditions that surrounded them. Just as “Midare Uchi” took inspiration from *bon daiko*, a series of pieces composed in the early days of the group integrated not only the festival music that could be heard in the *Shitamachi* area of Tokyo, but also the *hōgaku* performance techniques they had learned from Kineya Sasazou.

3.4 INTEGRATING SHITAMACHI MATSURI-BAYASHI AND HŌGAKU INTO THE SUKEROKU STYLE

3.4.1 *Shitamachi matsuiri-bayashi*

As the members of Sukeroku Taiko grew up hearing *bon daiko* and the music played at *bon odori*, they also grew up surrounded by other types of music played during the various *matsuri* (festivals) that take place in Tokyo throughout the year. A common sight at *matsuri* across Japan is an ensemble called a *matsuri-bayashi* (“festival orchestra”). With a standard orchestration in

Tokyo of a *shinobue* (a particular kind of bamboo flute, named according to the type of bamboo that is used), one smaller *byō-uchi-daiko*, two or three *shime-daiko*, and an *atarigane* (handheld gong), *matsuri-bayashi* provide much of the background music for *matsuri*. They accompany *mikoshi*, portable shrines believed to serve as palanquins for the gods, as they are carried around during *matsuri* to the various neighborhoods surrounding a Shinto shrine; the members of the *matsuri-bayashi* either walk behind a small cart upon which their instruments have been mounted, or ride upon floats called *dashi*. *Matsuri-bayashi* may also be found playing on the grounds of a shrine as the *mikoshi* is brought into the grounds, or at special stands placed along the route of the *mikoshi* (in the latter instance, they often serve as local neighborhood representatives who play the music when the *mikoshi* has stopped, allowing the musicians on the accompanying float to rest – one such stand can be seen in Figure 25).



Figure 25. A *matsuri-bayashi* in a booth along the route of a *mikoshi* procession

Sanja Matsuri, Asakusa, Tokyo. May 20, 2012

Photo by the author.

The music played by *matsuri-bayashi* ensembles – also called *matsuri-bayashi*, as a general musical genre name – is sometimes further named according to the region in which it is played or where the music came from; for example, as Malm notes, “there is a *kandabayashi* from the Kanda district of Tokyo, and the popular ensemble from the Asakusa area of Tokyo is called the *edobayashi*, for it is the repository for much of the festival music of old Tokyo (Edo), as is the district in which it is played” (Malm 2000, 58).⁸⁸ *Matsuri-bayashi* of Tokyo, particularly that of the *Shitamachi* area – where *Kanda-bayashi* and *Edo-bayashi* come from – consists of several set pieces performed in a certain order; in *Edo-bayashi*, for example, the order is “Yatai” (a name for the float upon which the *matsuri-bayashi* rides), “Kamakura” (a town south of Tokyo, and an old capital of Japan) “Shōten” (also transliterated by some “Shoden;” the entry into the sanctum of a shrine or temple), “Shichōme” (“Fourth Avenue,” referring to a street), and again “Yatai.” The different pieces correspond to different points during the procession; “Yatai” is played when the procession begins and ends, while “Shichōme” is played when a *mikoshi* is nearing a neighborhood representative booth or entering/leaving the shrine.

The music of *Edo-bayashi* and *Kanda-bayashi* consists of somewhat interlocking rhythmic patterns between the *shime-daiko*, *ō-daiko* (a *byō-uchi-daiko* that is not the same size as the *ō-daiko* used in modern *wadaiko* ensembles, but is named so merely because it is larger than

⁸⁸ In addition in its role in *mikoshi* processions, *matsuri-bayashi* in Tokyo is often played as accompaniment for *kagura*; in other words, it may be *kagura-bayashi* as well, thus having ideological similarities to the music that served as the starting point for Osuwa Daiko.

About Romanization: *kandabayashi* and *edobayashi* can also be transliterated as *Kanda-bayashi* and *Edo-bayashi*. I have chosen the latter Romanizations, as it places the emphasis upon the place name of origin of the music: Kanda, part of Tokyo, and Edo, the old name of Tokyo.

the *shime-daiko*), and *atarigane*, played underneath a *fue* melody. While written notation does exist for this music, it is generally taught by rote. It is semi-improvisational in nature – that is, there are set parts, but depending on the circumstance it may be left to the performer when to play a certain rhythm; as such, it has a feeling of spontaneity (for a discussion of this topic, see Malm 1975).

Figure 26 provides one example of this music, taken from the repeat of “Yatai” towards the end of an *Edo-bayashi* cycle (seen in video clip “3-4-Edo bayashi”). As the *fue* plays its melody (not transcribed in the example, as for the purposes of establishing a connection between *Edo-bayashi* and Sukeroku Taiko the *fue* part is secondary, for Sukeroku Taiko rarely used a *fue*), the *shime-daiko* players and *atarigane* player perform variations of an intricate rhythmic pattern that combines loud and soft, accented and unaccented notes. Meanwhile, the *ō-daiko* player interjects several different rhythms that interlock with the *shime-daiko* and *atarigane* parts, followed by periods of rest. The result is a complex combination of rhythms that has a semi-improvisation feel to it, with the different rhythms of the instruments interlocking with each other.

The musical score is presented in four systems, each containing six measures. The staves are labeled on the left: *shime-daiko*, *ō-daiko*, and *atarigane*. The *shime-daiko* staff uses a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The *ō-daiko* staff features eighth notes and rests. The *atarigane* staff uses a diamond-shaped notehead to represent the quiet pressing of the drumsticks. A measure rest for the *atarigane* staff in the second system is indicated by a double bar line with a '2' and a double slash.

Figure 26. An excerpt from the “Yatai” section of an *Edo-bayashi* performance⁸⁹

⁸⁹ About this transcription: The notes provided for the *shime-daiko* are the primary notes that can be heard; depending on the player, there may also be softer notes that help to provide time, but aren’t necessarily crucial to the rhythm. In addition, the diamond-shaped noteheads represent the quiet pressing of the drumsticks onto the head of

Elements from the *matsuri-bayashi* played in the *Shitamachi* area of Tokyo, particularly the complex rhythmic patterns on the *shime-daiko* and the interlocking nature of the music, would gain prominent roles in many of Sukeroku Taiko compositions. At the same time, however, the performances practices of *hōgaku* that the group was taught by Kineya Sasazou would also play a prominent role in the development of the Sukeroku style.

3.4.2 Hōgaku

While *hōgaku* is the general term for all Japanese classical music, including both the music of the court – known as *gagaku* – and the music of the theater (Noh, kabuki, etc.), it is more typically used in reference to theater music. This, in turn, can be further subdivided into more specialized terminology for each theatrical genre: *noh-hayashi* for Noh and *kabuki-hayashi* for kabuki.⁹⁰ Instrumentation is similar to *matsuri-bayashi* to the degree that drums and flutes are used, but there are variations depending on the theatrical genre. A *noh-hayashi* consists of a *nohkan*, a high-pitched bamboo flute, and three types of drums – a *ko-tsuzumi*, an *ō-tsuzumi*, and a *shime-daiko* (sometimes simply called the *taiko*). The *ko-tsuzumi* and *ō-tsuzumi* are hourglass shaped drums played by hand, with two heads stretched across iron rings held into play on each side of the drum and tightened via ropes (Figure 27).

the drums, audible and time but not necessarily part of the main rhythm; rather, it is almost a time-keeping motion more than a part of the larger rhythmic structure.

Meanwhile, in the *atarigane* part, the x-shaped note heads represent a hit on the side of the *atarigane* – *kuchi-shōga* ‘chi’ – while the regular noteheads are hits in the center – *kuchi-shōga* “chon.”

⁹⁰ Both genres on a larger level are sometimes referred to as *hōgaku-hayashi*.



Figure 27. An ō-tsuzumi

Photo by Flickr user Peter Roan

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/peterjr1961/5193700039/> (accessed March 5, 2013)

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The instruments of the *noh-hayashi* also serve as the foundation of the orchestra used in kabuki, with the addition of the shamisen (a plucked string instrument) and a bamboo flute called a *takebue*. Complementing this ensemble is another group of musicians that play in a small room just offstage called the *kuromisu* (“black curtain”); this ensemble is known as the *geza ongaku* (“offstage music”). Charged with creating sound effects and other musical cues not performed by the musicians on stage, they utilize a wide variety of instruments – in addition to those used onstage, there is also the *ō-daiko* and an assortment of other percussion instruments.⁹¹ The use of the *ō-daiko* in this setting is worth noting, for it is out of the music of the *geza ongaku* that

⁹¹ See Malm 2000 for a more detailed discussion of the instruments used in the *geza ongaku*. Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments: The New Edition*, 241-49.

Sukeroku Taiko got their inspiration for the use of the *ō-daiko* in their ensemble (whereas Oguchi Daihachi was influenced more by the use of the drum in Shinto rite and festival music).

Mogi notes that certain elements of *hōgaku-hayashi* were particularly influential as the future members of Sukeroku Taiko learned from Kineya Sasazou; primarily, “the basic performance practices of *hōgaku-hayashi*, along with phrasing, the way of producing the voice, the organization of the right and left hands (dividing when to alternately hit the right and left bachi and when to hit at the same time), and the attachment of dynamics” (Mogi 2010, 36). The vocal gestures particular to *hōgaku* would especially help separate the Sukeroku style from other *wadaiko* styles that would later develop. Called *kakegoe*, they are stylized shouts used partially to keep time. More than just abstract vocal gestures, they are integral parts of the music; indeed, Malm notes that “a pattern is not correctly played unless both the drum sounds and calls are performed in the proper order” (Malm 2000, 143). Further, these rhythmic patterns are not conceptualized as being played by one drummer, but are a composite of the *ko-tsuzumi* and *ō-tsuzumi* parts together with the *kakegoe*.⁹²

Another performance practice taken from *hōgaku* and used in Sukeroku Taiko’s new performance style is related to *shime-daiko* performance. Conscious efforts are made to produce distinct types of sounds in *hōgaku shime-daiko* performance practice; Malm lists four basic sounds: “small, medium, large, and muffled (*shō*, *chū*, *dai*, and *osameru*)” (Malm 2000, 141). Further, stylized movements are used both to play these sounds and during certain patterns: one such example is a motion in which the left stick is brought back to the right shoulder and then down at an angle to hit the drum, rather than a simple up and down motion. The result is a series

⁹² A detailed discussion of *hogaku* drumming patterns can be found in Malm: “An Introduction to Taiko Drum Music in the Japanese No Drama,” *Ethnomusicology* 4, no. 2 (1960).

of complex sounds and motions that adds a great amount of variety to what can be accomplished with a single drum. In their pieces, Sukeroku Taiko would routinely utilize these various sounds to create a complex and musically interesting *shime-daiko* part, particularly in a suite of works called “Oroshi Daiko,” “Shiraume Daiko,” and “Matsuri Daiko.”

3.4.3 “Oroshi Daiko”-“Shiraume Daiko”-“Matsuri Daiko”⁹³

Bringing together the *Shitamachi* area *matsuri-bayashi* that surrounded the members of Sukeroku Taiko as they grew up and the *hōgaku* elements they learned from Kineya Sasazou, the members began to compose works that were a step removed from the *bon daiko*-influenced music that had filled the majority of their early repertoire, both more musically complex and involving more complex performance practices. Three pieces in particular – “Oroshi Daiko,” “Shiraume Daiko,” and “Matsuri Daiko” – would draw heavily from these performance traditions and add a different element to the emerging world of *wadaiko*. Often performed as a suite, these works provide both a musical and a visual contrast to solo-based works like “Midare Uchi.”

⁹³ The descriptions of these pieces are based on a variety of observed performances, including ones by Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, the Nihon Taiko Dojo, and the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble, with choices about the version to be presented determined by a survey of rhythms, arrangements, and performance technique common to all three groups. The pieces have been arranged and rearranged over the years, with different groups playing different versions; however, original Sukeroku Taiko members are in charge of the former two groups, and the founder of the latter learned from original members and has extensive knowledge of the history of the works. As such, common musical elements could be considered to be part of the original version.

The instrumentation for these pieces takes its cue from *matsuri-bayashi*, primarily using *shime-daiko*, *nagadō-daiko*, and *ō-daiko* (some groups add bamboo flute as well, but does this not appear to be part of normal performance practice, and as such will not be considered in the following discussion). The number of *shime-daiko* and *nagadō-daiko* can vary depending on the situation; however, there are always multiple *nagadō-daiko*, as the works utilize rhythmic parts divided among the players.

3.4.3.1 “Oroshi Daiko”

“Oroshi Daiko” is an introductory piece, filled with dramatic drum rolls that rise and fall in volume and echo the work’s title (one meaning of *oroshi* is “wind blowing down the mountains”).⁹⁴ According to Mochizuki Saburo, the piece “was created by bringing together compositions [from *kabuki-hayashi*] like “Ichi-ban Daiko,” “Chakutō,” and “Uchi-dashi” that are even today performed as a ritual” (personal communication, December 2012). The influence of “Ichi-ban Daiko” is most apparent in “Oroshi Daiko.” This piece, played to announce the beginning of a kabuki performance and the rising of the curtain, features a series of *yama-oroshi*, rolls that start slowly and get faster with each hit. This is evoked in “Oroshi Daiko” with a progression split amongst four *nagadō-daiko* players that begins slow and gradually gets faster (Figure 28).⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Many modern Sukeroku-influenced groups open this suite with a piece entitled “Shunrai” (“Thunder”), rather than “Oroshi Daiko.” This piece has many similarities to “Oroshi Daiko” in terms of construction and development, suggesting that it may be a variation of the original piece; however, when “Shunrai” was developed is unclear.

⁹⁵ A performance of “Oroshi Daiko” by the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble is included in a 2011 video of the group uploaded to YouTube. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLukv6M-oFg> (accessed March 3, 2013). Endo

Start ♩=40, accel

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system includes three parts: Nagadō-daiko (top), Shime-daiko (middle), and Ō-daiko (bottom). The Nagadō-daiko part consists of six staves, each with a different rhythmic pattern. The Shime-daiko part consists of two staves, each with a different rhythmic pattern. The Ō-daiko part consists of one staff with a different rhythmic pattern. The second system includes two parts: Nagadō (top) and Shime (bottom). The Nagadō part consists of five staves, each with a different rhythmic pattern. The Shime part consists of one staff with a different rhythmic pattern. The score is written in a Western musical notation style, with notes and rests on a five-line staff. The tempo is marked as 'Start ♩=40, accel'.

Figure 28. The beginning of "Oroshi Daiko," featuring patterns inspired by hōgaku's "Ichi-ban Daiko"

learned the piece when studying with the original members of Sukeroku Taiko in Tokyo in the 1980s. The Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble is one of the few groups to still play “Oroshi Daiko” rather than “Shunrai.”

“Oroshi Daiko” can be found at 10:23-12:51 in the YouTube video.

Following this opening, each musician plays a drumroll in the same sequence in which they entered at the beginning of the piece, cycled several times. They then proceed into a segment similar to the opening, with each *nagadō-daiko* player entering in sequence as the music gets progressively faster and louder with each entrance, before the piece ends with one last roll (Figure 29). When performed as a suite, this leads directly into “Shiraume Daiko.”

The musical score is divided into three systems, each featuring two staves: Nagadō (top) and Shime (bottom). The Nagadō staff is marked with a double bar line and a '2' with a slash, indicating a 2/4 time signature. The Shime staff is marked with a double bar line and a '2' with a slash, indicating a 2/4 time signature.

System 1:

- Nagadō:** Starts with a *p cresc.* (piano crescendo) and continues with a *mp cresc.* (mezzo-piano crescendo).
- Shime:** Starts with a *mp cresc.* (mezzo-piano crescendo).

System 2:

- Nagadō:** Starts with a *mf cresc.* (mezzo-forte crescendo).
- Shime:** Starts with a *f cresc.* (forte crescendo).

System 3:

- Nagadō:** Continues with a *f cresc.* (forte crescendo).
- Shime:** Continues with a *f cresc.* (forte crescendo).

The score concludes with a final double bar line and a '2' with a slash, indicating a 2/4 time signature.

Figure 29. The end of "Oroshi Daiko"

3.4.3.2 “Shiraume Daiko”

The music of “Shiraume Daiko” (*shiraume* meaning “white plum blossoms”) is meant to evoke images of the Yushima Tenjin shrine; in particular, the plum blossoms that bloom at the shrine. According to Mochizuki Saburo, the piece “expresses through taiko these white plum blossoms, bearing the cold and blooming just a little, undaunted by snow” (personal communication, December 2012). As was the case with “Oroshi Daiko,” “Shiraume Daiko” draws from the kabuki *hōgaku* tradition. However, rather than quoting pieces in the fashion of “Oroshi Daiko,” “Shiraume Daiko” uses *hōgaku-hayashi* performance practices within the midst of a new composition.

“Shiraume Daiko” opens with a long *kakegoe* (see the above discussion of *hōgaku* for an explanation of this term), with the tone of the voice moving from low to high. *Kakegoe* is a signature part of this piece, require performers to not only hit the drum but also make vocal gestures as they play, much in the fashion of *hōgaku-hayashi*. The piece then proceeds with a series of phrases combining interplay between the different instruments (an example of which is found in Figure 30, and is seen in video clip “3-5-Shiraume Daiko”).⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Video clip “3-5-Shiraume Daiko” is an excerpt of a performance by Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, a group founded in the early 1980s by Sukeroku Taiko founding member Kobayashi Seido (playing in the *ō-daiko* in this clip). See section 6.1 of this chapter for a discussion of successor groups like this one.

Taken from Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, *Les Tambours De Tokyo Live*.

The image shows a musical score for three parts of a daiko ensemble: nagadō-daiko, shime-daiko, and ō-daiko. The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the initial rhythmic patterns for each part. The second system shows a more complex rhythmic pattern for the shime-daiko part, featuring diamond-shaped noteheads and stems without noteheads, indicating the use of the hōgaku-hayashi technique. The lyrics 'Ho', 'Yo', 'Ei', 'Ya', and 'Ho' are written above the notes.

Figure 30. Excerpt from "Shiraume Daiko"⁹⁷

The *shime-daiko* ostinato in this excerpt is of particular interest, as it makes use of *hōgaku-hayashi* technique.⁹⁸ It features an *osameru* technique (indicated in the transcription with diamond-shaped noteheads), in which the *bachi* stays on the drumhead after hitting in order to

⁹⁷ In this transcription, stems without a notehead indicate the rhythmic placement of *kakegoe*.

⁹⁸ The term "ostinato" refers to "the repetition of a musical pattern many times in succession while other musical elements are general changing." Laurie Schnapper, "Ostinato," in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. (Oxford University Press, 2013).

muffle the sound. The *kakegoe* performed by the *shime-daiko* player alone is also of interest, reflecting practices more commonly found in *hōgaku*.⁹⁹

In performances of “Shiraume Daiko,” groups also integrate a variety of different visual gestures, with choreographed movements by the *nagadō-daiko* and *ō-daiko* players including arm circles and points of the drum sticks (some of which can be seen in the accompanying video clip). They are similar to these ones developed for *bon daiko* and often used in “Midare Uchi” solos, suggesting that by this point in the development of the Sukeroku style individual visual expressions were being codified to some degree.

3.4.3.3 “Matsuri Daiko”

The final piece of the suite is “Matsuri Daiko.” A continuation of the theme from “Shiraume Daiko,” it describes the moment when “the white flowers [of Yushima Tenjin] bloom, withstanding the cold” (Mochizuki Saburo, personal communication, December 2012). At the same time, however, the piece has more in common musically with *Edo-bayashi* than with *hōgaku*, featuring complex rhythms on the *shime-daiko* and rhythmic interplay between the various instruments. In many sections, each instrument group plays a different pattern, with the *nagadō-daiko* and *ō-daiko* trading off rhythms while the *shime-daiko* plays an intricate rhythmic series spiritually linked to festival rhythms.

The influence of Shitamachi festival music is particularly on display in the middle section of the piece, which features interplay between the *shime-daiko* and *nagadō-daiko* in a manner similar to the festival music. An intricate rhythm combining accented and unaccented, loud and

⁹⁹ According to Mochizuki Saburo, the piece did not originally use *kakegoe*; rather, he added the gestures after he began learning *kabuki-hayashi* (personal communication, December 2012).

soft notes on the *shime-daiko* is accompanied by sporadic interjections by the *nagadō-daiko* that fit into the *shime-daiko* rhythm (Figure 31, and seen in video clip “3-6-Matsuri Daiko”).¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Video clip “3-6-Matsuri Daiko” is taken from a video by the author of a public performance by Nihon Taiko Dojo in the Asakusa area of Tokyo during Sanja Matsuri, May 19, 2012. The Nihon Taiko Dojo was created and is led by Sukeroku Taiko founding member Tosha Kiyonari.

The musical score is written for three parts: nagadō-daiko (combined), shime-daiko, and ō-daiko. The notation is on three staves, each with a double bar line at the beginning. The first system shows the initial measures. The second system is marked with a '3' above the first staff, indicating a triplet. The third system is marked with a '6' above the first staff, indicating a sextuplet. The fourth system is marked with a '10' above the first staff, indicating a decuplet. The score includes various musical symbols such as eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and rests, along with dynamic markings like accents (>) and slurs.

Figure 31. Excerpt from "Matsuri Daiko"

Both as individual compositions and when seen as a suite, “Oroshi Daiko,” “Shiraume Daiko,” and “Matsuri Daiko,” represent a dramatic shift from earlier works like “Midare Uchi.”

There are no improvisations; rather, each work is a fully-composed pieces. Some of the visual elements taken from *bon daiko* are present, particularly in “Shiraume Daiko” – with its arm circles and points – but more prevalent are performance practices and musical material taken from other musical genres such as *hōgaku* and festival music of the Tokyo *Shitamachi* area. As a whole, these works represent a dramatic step forward for not just Sukeroku Taiko but indeed the emerging *wadaiko* genre. It is music that has its roots in traditional musical forms but is meant for *wadaiko* group performance, pieces designed to be enjoyed as music showcasing taiko rather than as part of sacred practices or ritual. This evolution would continue as Sukeroku Taiko continued to embrace new ideas, including the inclusion of new choreographic elements into a work that would help to define the Sukeroku style.

3.5 “YODAN UCHI”

With the inclusion and adaption of techniques and musical ideas taken from *bon daiko*, *hōgaku*, and Tokyo *Shitamachi matsuri-bayashi* into pieces meant for performance in clubs and cabarets, Sukeroku Taiko was beginning to create a visual and musical style that was much different from the Osuwa Daiko style that was being seen on television and at events like the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. As they developed their visual and musical style, the group also created what has been called the Sukeroku style’s signature piece, “Yodan Uchi” (“hitting four sides”), described by Kenny Endo as “probably the most popular piece among practitioners of *kumi daiko* outside of Japan” (Endo 1999, 20).

Mochizuki Saburo describes the origins of “Yodan Uchi” in a December 2012 letter:

This work was composed in 1968 when I traveled as a member of Sukeroku Taiko to the United States for an approximately three month performance tour of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas. At the San Francisco and Los Angeles performances, since the stages were round, we needed a movement that would fit those stages, and the work was quickly created. It was the work that took the most time amongst all the pieces to that point. At the beginning it was a two-stand style – “Nidan Uchi” – but after I returned to Japan we created the cross movements, and it became “Yodan Uchi.” (Personal communication, December 2012)

In addition to needing a movement that was visually appealing to a crowd that surrounded the performers, for the creation of “Yodan Uchi” – often called simply “Yodan” – Sukeroku Taiko members drew inspiration from a performance by a Korean women’s dance troupe that they had seen on television, where the women each played three drums. While the exact performance is unknown, judging from choreographic elements, the dance that members saw was perhaps the *samgo-mu*, a dance in which a single dancer/drummer plays multiple drums. In one version, the dancer stands amidst three drums hung on stands, one to each side and one behind; it is often performed with three dancers.¹⁰¹

Rhythmically, Sukeroku members based their new piece off of the base rhythm used in “Oiuchi Daiko,” an early composition “based on the native drumming found in Hachijo Island,” in which each drummer takes turns soloing (Figure 32) (Endo 1999, 23).

¹⁰¹ For an example of this drum dance, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LTqEKJIm4w> (accessed April 12, 2013).



Figure 32. The base rhythm of "Oiuchi Daiko," utilized in "Yodan Uchi"

Based on this primary rhythm, and drawing upon the visual inspiration of the Korean dance troupe, “Yodan” became a work that was both musically and visually appealing. The basic setup is similar to that described at the beginning of this chapter: a single *ō-daiko* with *nagadō-daiko* on *naname* stands placed on each side.¹⁰² One drummer stands on each side of the *ō-daiko*, facing the audience; two others stand on the outer sides of the *nagadō-daiko*, making a total of four drummers at the front of the stage. Depending on the amount of performers, there may also be several *nagadō-daiko* on slanted *naname* stands positioned at the back of the stage.

A standard “Yodan” performance opens with a flurry of drum hits by one of the center drummers. The ensemble then lets out a *kakegoe* vocalization, holding it as the center drummers circle their arms, moving around until they reach a certain pose. The main piece then begins, either starting with an introductory composed section or moving immediately into solo improvisations.

As the drummers play, they move in between the drums; in many cases, the rhythms and movement are linked. Endo lists several movements that are used extensively in this piece, each of which has its own related rhythm:

Aiuchi (two drummers facing each other between the *odaiko* and *chudaiko*), *san nin mawari* (three drummers rotating around a *chudaiko* as they turn between the

¹⁰² Indeed, the two-drum setup discussed in the chapter introduction is used in “Nidan Uchi” (“hitting two sides”), mentioned by Mochizuki in his letter.

chudaiko and *odaiko*), cross section (two drummers rotating at the same time between the *odaiko* and *chudaiko*). (Endo 1999, 25)¹⁰³

This naming of movements is of particular interest, as it suggests the further codification of choreographed elements within the Sukeroku style.

Improvisations typically consist of variations of these movements and rhythms, tailored to each individual soloist (see video clip “3-7-Yodan Uchi” for an extended improvisation by Sukeroku Taiko founding member Kobayashi Seido, accompanied by members of Oedo Sukeroku Taiko).¹⁰⁴ Each solo is slightly faster than the last, until the last player moves at a blistering pace. Once the last solo is completed, a bridge section is played, named so both because of its placement in the structure of the piece – that is, the ‘bridge’ as a transition between larger sections of a piece, a term taken from popular music meaning a preparation for a return to the original material – and because towards the end of the transition the center drummers face the *nagadō-daiko* and arch their backs as they play the rhythmic ostinato on the *ō-daiko*, making themselves look to some degree like a bridge. Following the bridge, the group moves into the last section of Yodan, a composed section combining the movements called *aiuchi*, cross section, and

¹⁰³ *Chudaiko* (or *chū-daiko*) is another name for a *nagadō-daiko*, owing to the fact that it is a middle-sized drum (*chū* is one reading of the Chinese character meaning in or between), falling in between the large *ō-daiko* and the small *shime-daiko*.

Similarly, *odaiko* is another transliteration of *ō-daiko* (which I use in this dissertation).

“*Aiuchi*” means “joined hitting.” “*San nin mawari*,” meanwhile, means “three person rotation”; it can also be transliterated as *san-nin mawari*, owing to the fact that the word *nin* in this phrase is a counter, meaning three people (“*san*” is the Japanese word for three). Counters and their related numbers are often signified by a dash connected the two words; hence, “*san-nin*.”

¹⁰⁴ Video clip taken from Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, *Les Tambours De Tokyo Live*.

san-nin mawari.¹⁰⁵ It ends with everyone rolling on their drums, followed by a short pause as all players move back to the pose position, and then one last hit.

“Yodan Uchi” not only reflects the intercultural nature of *wadaiko*, as a piece that developed as a direct result of Sukeroku Taiko touring the United States and integrated Korean drumming visual elements, but represents a step forward for *wadaiko* compositions. The inclusion of predetermined choreographic patterns is different of the improvisation movements used by Sukeroku Taiko members in “Midare Uchi,” and a continuation of the movements used in the “Oroshi Daiko” – “Shiraume Daiko” – “Matsuri Daiko” suite; the fact that these movements are given a name is particularly unique, something rarely done in *wadaiko* performance. Further, the combination of improvisation and composed section hearkens back to the music of Osuwa Daiko, which also mixed improvised and set rhythms, but is slightly different owing to the strict separation of the section; at the same time, it is a far cry from previous Sukeroku compositions, which were either improvised or fully composed.

Even more than forty years after its composition, “Yodan Uchi” is one of the most visually striking pieces in the *wadaiko* repertoire. It is the Sukeroku style’s signature piece, a blending of improvisational endeavors and visual acrobatics. Within the work, the soloistic tendencies that emerged at *bon daiko* competitions were combined with new visual and rhythmic influences to create a work that would excite the audiences at the clubs and cabarets that were the group’s primary performance sites. It was a giant step in the direction away from festival drumming and towards a new manner of drumming that was to be enjoyed simply as music.

¹⁰⁵ A transcription and analysis of this section was the primary focus of Endo’s master thesis. See his work for a detailed discussion of this section. Endo, “Yodan Uchi: A Contemporary Composition for Taiko.”

3.6 PROFESSIONAL WADAIKO

As Sukeroku Taiko bolstered their repertoire and continued to establish their unique style of performance, their performance activities grew, such as the aforementioned 1968 tour of the western United States. It was on this tour that the group first encountered Tanaka Seiichi, a Japanese immigrant who had just begun performing taiko at the San Francisco Cherry Blossom Festival in April of that year. Moved by their performance, Tanaka asked the Sukeroku members to teach him their style of performance. After initially turning down the request, Ishizuka eventually gave in, and following the tour remained behind in San Francisco for several weeks to teach Tanaka the basic elements of the Sukeroku style. When he returned home to Tokyo, he left behind several drums that they could not check on the return plane, bolstering the initial activities of what would become the San Francisco Taiko Dojo, the first taiko group in the United States (Mogi 2010, 39).¹⁰⁶ In this way, the Sukeroku style began to expand beyond Tokyo into other parts of the world.

Moving beyond this first tour of the United States, Sukeroku Taiko quickly took on more and more performances, not just in Tokyo but in other parts of Japan as well. The group soon became overwhelmed with work, to the point where more members were recruited and eventually several performance teams were created to deal with all the requests that were coming in. Mogi characterizes the office atmosphere at this time as being “like an entertainment production company” (Mogi 2010).

¹⁰⁶ Tanaka would eventually also study with Oguchi Daihachi, with the San Francisco Taiko Dojo performing a fusion of the two groups’ styles. See Chapter 5 for more on this.

This was a major development for *wadaiko* performance and a crucial difference from Oguchi Daihachi and the activities of Osuwa Daiko. Members of Sukeroku Taiko saw themselves as working musicians, even if they had other, non-musical sources of income. Unlike Osuwa Daiko, whose main performance venue was shrines and temples, Sukeroku Taiko would perform wherever they were offered a gig. Their origins may have been similar to Osuwa Daiko, in that they took inspiration from a regional drumming tradition, but the approach to the art form was completely different. There was no discussion about the group being successors of any particular tradition. Of course, much of this was due to the influence of Sanada Minoru and Kowase Susumu. Sukeroku Taiko was formed as an entertainment group and managed as such. The point was not to revitalize a lost drumming style, but to make money and serve as entertainment. Thus, Sukeroku Taiko was the first professional *wadaiko* group, leaders in the development of *wadaiko* as an emerging musical genre.

Meanwhile, there are also fundamental musical differences. Oguchi's performance style emphasized large groups, while the Sukeroku Taiko repertoire is more flexible, often using groups of no more than four or five. Further, the rhythms and compositional structure of Sukeroku Taiko's pieces was much more complex than that being composed by Oguchi. Much of this is due to the influences on the development of the Sukeroku style. *Hōgaku* is a long-standing performance tradition that has developed rigid performance guidelines and techniques. The lessons with Kineya Sasazou were strict, but the performance skills they gained were subtle and more expressive. Even the *Shitamachi matsuri-bayashi* that was integrated into works like "Matsuri Daiko" was of a higher degree of difficulty. The Sukeroku style, then, is much more complex than the style that Oguchi developed, with more nuanced performance practices being required for pieces.

Indeed, the concept of tradition as Sukeroku Taiko perceived it was much different than Oguchi's conception of the term. For Oguchi, the tradition was simply the festival drumming tradition of the Suwa Grand Shrine. In the case of Sukeroku Taiko, meanwhile, the traditions from which they drew inspiration were festival music (*bon daiko* and *Shitamachi-area matsuri-bayashi*), *hōgaku*, and even foreign influences such as the visual elements taken from Korean drumming. They did not actively invoke these traditions in discussions about their group, not speaking of themselves as successors or any other position, but rather utilized elements from these musical traditions as they created music meant to reflect the spirit of the *Shitamachi* area.

3.6.1 Beyond Sukeroku Taiko

The complex musical traditions to which members were introduced had an even greater impact on the future of the group beyond just the performance practices that were developed. Impacted by the experience of taking lessons with Kineya Sasazou, Ishizuka Yutaka and Onozato Ganei both decided to enter into the world of *hogaku*. Ishizuka entered into the Mochizuki school of *hōgaku* performance through Kineya's introduction, eventually receiving the stage name (*natori*) Mochizuki Saburo in 1972. Onozato, meanwhile, became a student of Tosha Yuho, a *hōgaku* performer that he had met on a concert tour; in 1977, he received the *natori* Tosha Kiyonari (Mogi 2010).

For a time the two continued to play with Sukeroku Taiko as they entered their studies, but after a while they decided to devote themselves solely to *hōgaku*. During this time, the group had already gone bankrupt once in the early 1970s, having gone beyond the limits of what the performers could handle, and was reformed in 1974 under Imaizumi Yukata, a young *bon daiko* champion who had joined the group shortly after its founding. By the time Ishizuka and Onozato

decided to become full-time *hōgaku* performers, Kobayashi had decided to devote himself entirely to performing with Sukeroku Taiko, but eventually there was a split; Kobayashi formed a new group, Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, while Imaizumi continued to lead Sukeroku Taiko (which eventually changed the English transliteration of its name to Sukeroku Daiko).¹⁰⁷ Both groups continue to play the original repertoire of Sukeroku Taiko today while also creating their own original works.¹⁰⁸

Regardless of the later turmoil, Sukeroku Taiko had an enormous impact on the world of *wadaiko*. With the slanted *naname* stand that emerged from their *bon daiko* experience, they introduced a manner of hitting that was completely different from the flat horizontal stands that can be found over much of Japan. By integrating *Shitamachi matsuri-bayashi* and *hōgaku*, they

¹⁰⁷ The inclusion of both “Sukeroku Daiko” and “Sukeroku Taiko” in the names of these two groups is a reflection of romanization choices made by artists. References to the original group Sukeroku Taiko uses the transliterated “Taiko,” drawing from practices both by a related group Oedo Sukeroku Taiko in its English language profile and in used in scholastic writings by Endo and others. See, for example, http://www.oedosukerokutaiko.com/htm/top_english.html (accessed March 9, 2013), and Kenny Endo, “Yodan Uchi: A Contemporary Composition for Taiko” (MA Thesis, University of Hawaii, 1999).

Meanwhile, “Sukeroku Daiko” is the preferred transliteration of the incarnation of the group as led by Imaizumi Yutaka (<http://www.sukeroku-daiko.com/>, accessed March 9, 2013).

¹⁰⁸ Oedo Sukeroku Taiko was not the only group to split away from Sukeroku Taiko. Another professional group in Tokyo, Amanojaku, was founded in the mid-1980s by Watanabe Yoichi, who had been a member of Sukeroku Taiko after Kobayashi Seido split away.

<http://english.amanojaku.info/profile/index.html> (accessed March 3, 2013)

Additionally, Tosha Kiyonari founded the Nihon Taiko Dojo in the 1990s, which functions as both a performance troupe and a school for Tosha’s version of the Sukeroku style.

developed a sophisticated performance style capable of greater musical nuances. The performance style started by Oguchi Daihachi was being expanded into a larger musical realm.

More importantly, however, Sukeroku Taiko demonstrated that a taiko group could work as professional musicians. Moving away from the association that taiko had with shrines and temples, they helped to show that taiko could function as the primary instrument for the entertainment of audiences in a multitude of settings. In doing so they anticipated the rise in the 1970s of a group that would become more well-known both inside and outside of Japan: Ondekoza.

4.0 ONDEKOZA & KODO: FROM “REVITALIZING FOLK ARTS” TO WADAIKO AS ART MUSIC

By the early 1970s, *wadaiko* was reaching a new level of exposure in Japan. Building upon the group’s participation in the opening ceremonies of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and numerous appearances on television programs and at festivals across the nation, Osuwa Daiko performed at the 1970 World’s Fair in Osaka.¹⁰⁹ Taking advantage of this exposure, group founder Oguchi Daihachi began to spread his performance style across Japan, helping to form new groups in other prefectures.¹¹⁰ Meanwhile, Sukeroku Taiko was expanding beyond Tokyo to give more and more performances across Japan, presenting its blend of Tokyo *Shitamachi* festival drumming and *hōgaku* classical music at a variety of venues, from clubs and cabarets to store openings and private events. Performance requests for Sukeroku Taiko reached the point that it was necessary to create multiple performance troupes that embarked on tours across the nation, commonly featuring extended stays of two to three weeks at a single venue (Mogi 2010).

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 2.

¹¹⁰ A full list of the groups Oguchi helped to create can be found in his book *Tenko*. Daihachi Oguchi, *Tenko - Oguchi Daihachi No Nihon Taiko-Ron* 天鼓一小口大八の日本太鼓論 [Tenko: Oguchi Daihachi's Japanese Taiko Treatise] (Nagano, Japan: Ginga Shobo, 1987), 305-14.

As this expansion of activities placed *wadaiko* in a larger spotlight, the art form was further bolstered by the emergence in the early 1970s of a new group named Ondekoza, based on the island of Sado (off the west coast of Japan's main island of Honshu).¹¹¹ Following a few limited performances in Tokyo and Osaka beginning in 1973, Ondekoza gradually expanded its activities before bursting onto the world scene in Boston in 1975. Each member participated in the Boston Marathon then immediately climbed up onto a prepared stage and began to hit drums that were waiting there, continuing to play until all members finished the race. Their bold performance immediately placed *wadaiko* in a new spotlight.

The brainchild of a man named Den Tagayasu, Ondekoza was a new sort of *wadaiko* group: it was created not for performances at local shrines or clubs, but in performance halls and theaters around the world. Further, unlike Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko, Ondekoza did not present performance styles from a single city or region of Japan. Group members learned music and dance from across the nation, arranging the styles for stage performance. At the same time, however, the group was not confined to regional art-inspired pieces, but also established partnerships with artists from outside the Japanese folk and classical music worlds. Working with composers and musicians trained in Western symphonic music, the group helped to raise *wadaiko* performance to new heights that expanded the horizons of what a *wadaiko* group could accomplish.¹¹²

¹¹¹ See the map in Appendix B.2

¹¹² Much as was the case with previous chapters, this chapter owes much to the research of Shawn Bender, the first to write about the history of Ondekoza/Kodo. In addition to drawing from Bender's works, I also refer to Japanese-language sources, including a number of writings that were published after Bender published his

4.1 DEN TAGAYASU & THE CREATION OF ONDEKOZA

In August 1970, nearly 30 young men and women gathered on the island of Sado “to see the folk arts of Sado Island and reexamine the worth of local culture while learning about history and culture” (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 37). They responded to an advertisement by Den Tagayasu (born Tajiri Kōzō), an academic who had spent several years traveling around the nation. Den was struck by the state of decline of regional drumming traditions like Sado’s *ondeko* (“demon drumming”). He railed that *ondeko* and other traditions like it were “becoming mere spectacle,” stating that there was no life in the sound of the drums; Den was a follower of the writings of Mao Zedong, believing that “the source of artistic energy is found in farming communities,” and thus was quite dismayed by the current state of the drumming he encountered during his travels (Honma 1994, 11).

Inspired to change this degradation that he believed to be present not just in Sado but across Japan, Den enacted a series of plans with the help of ethnologist Miyamoto Tsuneichi, who wrote about the revitalization of local arts.¹¹³ He invited students, artists, and scholars to an

dissertation that subsequently served as the basis his 2012 book. Of particular help were a number of books written by former Kodo and Ondekoza members, as well as a retrospective book published by Kodo.

¹¹³ According to Shawn Bender, the term used by Den Tagayasu for “revitalization” was “*fukkatsu*.” Shawn Bender, “Drumming between Tradition and Modernity: Taiko and Neo-Folk Performance in Contemporary Japan” (Ph.D Dissertation, University of California, San Diego, 2003), 94.

This word is the same used by Oguchi Daihachi (see Chapter 2.4), which I previously translated as “revival.” However, Bender chooses to translate the word as “revitalize” when discussing Den’s vision, tying it to the writings of Miyamoto Tsuneichi and others. I have chosen to follow his model, as it is apparent that Den Tagayasu and

event on Sado Island called the Ondekoza Summer School (*Ondekoza Kaki Gakkō*, named after the *ondeko* drumming from Sado, adding to the end the Chinese character “za” which means “group”). Most participants were unsure of the purpose of the gathering but attended nonetheless; for example, Hayashi Eitetsu – a young graphic design student from Hiroshima who had recently moved to Tokyo – attended “simply because it appeared that Ei Rokusuke was going to speak and Tadanori Yokoo was going to appear” (Hayashi 1999, 9).¹¹⁴

After a week of touring around Sado, experiencing the farming life and observing local artisans, Den presented the participants with a bold plan:

I am going to create an artist’s village where people can learn about Japan’s folk performance arts and industrial arts, as well as a Sea of Japan University where people can reconsider the viewpoint from the Sea of Japan. For that reality, I am going to create “Ondekoza,” which will travel the world with taiko in order to raise funds and foster those thoughts. If at all possible, I would like you to participate. (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 37)

A small group of students chose to answer his call, each with their own reasons. Some found the idea of creating their own university to be greatly appealing, while others were intrigued by the idea of participating in a performance troupe. They were almost all from the main island of Honshu, not from Sado (resulting in a different approach than groups like Osuwa Daiko or Sukeroku Taiko, whose works were based on the music their members had grown up

Oguchi Daihachi had different intentions – Oguchi was concerned with a single performance practice, while Den had a larger vision.

¹¹⁴ Ei Rokusuke was a radio personality; Tadanori Yokoo, a graphic designer

hearing). The new members of Ondekoza began to live an austere lifestyle and underwent a severe training regiment, fostered by Den's "conviction that the taiko could not be sounded impressively without a powerful body" (Bender 2012, 65). They lived communally in an old schoolhouse while making their own furniture, growing as much food as possible, and more than anything else preparing their body; among other forms of training, they would run daily, the length of their runs getting longer as their bodies gained in strength.

At the same time, the members began to learn about Japanese performance arts, the beginning of Den's plan to revitalize traditional Japanese folk art. Members, few of who had any previous performing experience – save Hayashi Eitetsu, who began teaching himself Western drum set in the mid-1960s after becoming enthralled by Ringo Starr's drumming in The Beatles' single "She Loves You" – received lessons from top-level performers of assorted arts (Hayashi 2012, 89). They learned music performance techniques and dance and movement instruction from Japanese classical (*hōgaku*) musicians, Japanese dancers from a variety of traditions (theatrical, folk, and a mixture of styles called *nihon buyō*), and Western ballet teachers brought in from across the nation.¹¹⁵ In addition, beyond learning from artists who came to Sado members of Ondekoza also traveled to various parts of Japan to learn various folk performance traditions.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ *Nihon buyō* is described as "Japanese classical dance...based on the tradition of classical techniques transmitted through the preceding forms of art, and expressed through the medium of the stage."

<http://www.nihonbuyou.or.jp/english/about/index.html> (accessed March 4, 2013)

These "preceding forms of art" include Noh, kabuki, and various forms of folk dance.

¹¹⁶ Many performers of these styles were also invited back to Sado to teach workshops.

It was this experience in particular that not only caused Ondekoza to stand out amongst other groups but also represented a major step forward for *wadaiko* performance. Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko had taken influence from their local performance traditions; even as they created original compositions, they maintained a deep connection to the region in which they were founded. In contrast, while Ondekoza members did learn the *ondeko* of Sado, and the group became deeply associated with the island of Sado, they also heavily invested in learning folk arts from across Japan (Table 1 contains a selection of some of the folk arts learned during this time, taken from Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 50-51).

Table 1. A selection of the performance styles learned in the early days of Ondekoza

Name	Location	Type
<i>Ōtsugunai-kagura</i>	Iwate Prefecture	<i>Kagura</i>
<i>Iwasaki Onigenbai</i>	Iwate Prefecture	Dance
<i>Tsugaru Te-odori</i>	Aomori Prefecture	Dance
<i>Tsugaru-jamisen</i>	Aomori Prefecture	Instrumental
“Kiyari”	Miyake Island, Tokyo	Song

The group had an identity that transcended a single region, evolving into what Bender calls an “admixture of local and nonlocal” (Bender 2012, 72). Indeed, a majority of Ondekoza’s early repertoire was comprised of arrangements of the regional performance styles that they were learning. One such style came from the city of Chichibu, in Saitama Prefecture. It was one of the first of many regional drumming styles rearranged by Ondekoza members for stage performance, an action that would have a huge impact on the development of *wadaiko* music.

4.2 “YATAI-BAYASHI” & THE ARRANGEMENT OF REGIONAL FESTIVAL DRUMMING FOR THE WORLD STAGE

The festival music learned by Ondekoza members from the city of Chichibu, a city in the mountains of western Saitama Prefecture (northwest of Tokyo), is performed primarily during the Chichibu Night Festival (*Chichibu Yo-matsuri*) at the beginning of December. The festival was originally held to celebrate the once-a-year meeting of two lovers, a female representation of the Bodhisattva Myoken and a resident male god living in the mountains that surround Chichibu.¹¹⁷ Believed to have continued for over three hundred years, the Chichibu Night Festival has expanded over the centuries into a multi-day celebration in which the main attraction is the multiple *mikoshi* (portable shrines) processions that travel around the city on December 3, accompanied by six large floats called *yatai* (each representing a different part of the city).¹¹⁸ Thousands flock every year to the city to watch what is called “one of Japan’s three greatest hikiyama (float) festivals,” with the festivities culminating in a fireworks display at night as a procession makes its way through the darkened Chichibu streets, the floats adorned with paper lanterns called *chōchin* lit up from within by electric lights.¹¹⁹ These floats are quite large in size,

¹¹⁷ <http://www.chichibu-jinja.or.jp/yomatsuri/> (accessed January 25, 2013)

¹¹⁸ Festival floats have different names depending on region; thus, a float might be called a *dashi* in the Shitamachi area of Tokyo (see Chapter 3.4.1) but a *yatai* in Chichibu.

¹¹⁹ http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/attractions/event/traditionalevents/a63_fes_chichibu.html (accessed August 20, 2012)

See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hk3eNzg1Sls> for an official video about the festival – including many shots of the processions – created by the Chichibu city tourism department. (accessed December 28, 2012)

between 5.5 and 7 meters in height – 18-23 feet – and weighing between 12-20 tons.¹²⁰ They rest atop large wooden wheels and require several dozen people to pull them through the streets using large ropes. Ornately carved out of wood, with flowers, animals, and other designs adorning the float, the floats are robust enough for multiple people to stand on the roof during the procession (Figure 33).



Figure 33. Chichibu city residents standing upon a *yatai* at the Chichibu Night Festival

Chichibu, Japan. December 3, 2011

Photo by the author.

Each float contains a small stage and an enclosed room, covered by a large ornate roof. Upon the stage, some community members dance while others dressed in elaborate coats wave fans and yell to encourage the people pulling the float as well as the crowds watching the

¹²⁰ Measurements initially based on the author's estimates of floats at the festival in December 2011, with exact numbers given in a guidebook found on the official festival website. <http://www.chichibu.tv/map/index.html> (accessed August 20, 2012)

procession (as seen in Figure 33). Behind the stage is a small room where the festival music is performed, separated from the stage by a set of sliding doors. Although the music can always be heard, only stopping when the procession is finished, the performers are never seen. They sit inside the dark room, alternating between periods of playing and periods of rest; enough people are packed into the room so that the music continues uninterrupted for perhaps hours on end, and the members change constantly.

The instrumentation of the ensemble in the small room is the same as in many other festival orchestras across Japan: several *shime-daiko*, a *nagadō-daiko*, an *atarigane*, and a *fue*. The manner in which the *nagadō-daiko* is played has become a major attraction for many fans of the music: a drum – relatively large by festival music standards – is placed upon a stand that positions it horizontally and at a slight angle. The drummer sits facing the drum, legs placed through one end of the stand so that the feet rest underneath the body of the drum (Figure 34). In this way, the drum can be hit within the cramped space of the *yatai* room.



Figure 34. A *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi nagadō-daiko* stand
Chichibu Night Festival, Chichibu, Japan. December 3, 2011
Photo by the author.

The music played during the processions of the Chichibu Night Festival – known as *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* (“Yatai” being the local name for the float, and “bayashi” meaning orchestra) – consists of several primary sections played underneath a quasi-improvised flute melody: a brief introduction, an extended solo on the *nagadō-daiko* consisting of a series of patterns called the *ō-nami* (“big wave”) and *ko-nami* (“small wave”), a solo on the *shime-daiko* called the *tamairi* (“ball toss”), and a brief ending (the *bukkiri*, meaning “a sudden cut”). A repeated ostinato by the *shime-daiko* and *atarigane* provides a rhythmic foundation; this continuous stream of hits has a slight lilt to it, owing to a very slight pause that occurs after every four notes (Figure 35). As a result, the ostinato is can be thought of in groups of four, with a slight pause occurring after the fourth note. This hitched rhythm is one of the trademarks of *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* (and would later cause problems for Ondekoza members when they attempted to adapt the music for stage performance).

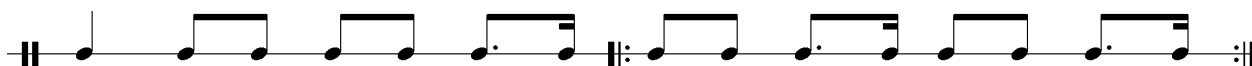


Figure 35. The rhythmic ostinato for *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi*

As provided in a hand-written transcription by Hayashi Eitetsu (personal communication, December 2012)¹²¹

As the procession begins, the *shime-daiko* and *atarigane* player start the ostinato as a quick introductory rhythm is played on the *nagadō-daiko* (Figure 36).¹²²

¹²¹ Unfortunately, this transcription does not fully convey the subtleties of the pause every four beats – it does not translate exactly to the rhythmic relationship laid out in this transcription, and may vary each repeat depending on the performance. Further, it does not fit within the equal subdivisions of a beat that serves as the basis for Western rhythmic notation.

¹²² Video clip “4-1-Chichibu Yatai-bayashi full” features a complete public performance of the festival music outside of the float by one of the many *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* performance organizations from across the city – recording by the author during the Chichibu Night Festival, December 3, 2011.

Owing to the popularity of the music, and its status as an Intangible Cultural Heritage object, there are many performances by various groups on a stage during the festival. The groups perform the same music as is played in the floats, only in a much abbreviated form (approximately ten minutes per performance, as compared to the potentially hours-long length during the procession).

The musical score is divided into three systems. The first system shows the initial measures for Shime-daiko, Atarigane, and Nagadō-daiko. Shime-daiko and Atarigane play a series of eighth notes, while Nagadō-daiko plays a longer note. The second system, marked with a '4', shows a more complex rhythmic pattern for all three instruments. The third system, marked with an '8', shows a further development of the pattern. A bracket labeled 'Beginning of the *ō-nami*' points to the start of the Nagadō-daiko part in the third system.

Figure 36. Introduction of *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi*

This is followed by a quasi-improvised passage on the *nagadō-daiko* that opens with a rhythmic sequence called the *ō-nami*, a long series of notes that mirrors the *shime-daiko* part (see

the above transcription) and eventually leads into a shorter section called the *ko-nami*. The *ko-nami* utilizes several different rhythmic patterns; the order in which they are played is left up to the performer, but the rhythms themselves are generally pre-determined, taken from the music played at the beginning of the procession (see video clip “4-2-Chichibu Yatai-bayashi 1;” Figure 37 contains one such *ko-nami* series as heard at the Chichibu Night Festival, with the initial appearance of several reoccurring rhythms featured in brackets).¹²³

¹²³ Transcriptions in this chapter are based on observations made at the Chichibu Night Festival, December 3, 2011, and supplemented by two articles published in *Taikology* meant as an introduction to the performance practices of the music. Munenori Higashi, "Taiko Ongakufuroku, Dai Ikkai: Chichibu Yatai-Bayashi 太鼓楽譜録、第一回：秩父屋台囃子 [Taiko Music Record, #1: Chichibu Yatai-bayashi]," *Taikorojii* たいころじい [Taikology] 2(1989).; "Taiko Ongakufuroku, Dai Nikkai: Chichibu Yatai-Bayashi, Sono Ii 太鼓楽譜録、第二回：秩父屋台囃子、その ii [Taiko Music Record, #2: Chichibu Yatai-bayashi, Part II]," *Taikorojii* たいころじい [Taikology] 3(1989).

In both the original *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* and Ondekoza's arrangement, the flute part is not as important as the drumming; as such, transcriptions in this dissertation will focus on the taiko parts.



Figure 37. An example of a “*ko-nami*” series from *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi*

After the first *nagadō-daiko* player decides they are finished, another takes over on the same drum; this new performer immediately begins anew the interwoven *ō-nami/ko-nami* series. This cycle continues as the float is dragged through the streets, the strong sounds of the drums inspiring the many people pulling the float to continue on. Indeed, much of the music of *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* serves a purpose beyond the musical, tied to motion and spatial coordination of the float.¹²⁴ The music changes when the float has to be turned, either 90 degrees to go down another street or 180 degrees in preparation for a later procession that will move in the opposite direction. At these points in the procession, the *shime-daiko* players begin a solo section called the *tamairi*, with the *atarigane* continuing the rhythmic ostinato as the *fue* continues its quasi-improvised playing. Much like the *ko-nami*, this section is semi-improvised;

¹²⁴ This would prove to be another issue to overcome when Ondekoza arranged the music for the stage, as described in the next section.

certain rhythms are repeated, but their order is left to the soloist and they are often varied slightly (see video clip “4-3-Chichibu Yatai-bayashi 2;” an example of a *tamaire* series can be found in the transcription in Figure 38).



Figure 38. An excerpt of a *tamaire* series from *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi*¹²⁵

Once the float has been turned, a signal is given to the musicians by the bearers, and the music once again returns to the *ō-nami/ko-nami* cycle – the *nagadō-daiko* begins playing once again, and the *shime-daiko* returns to the lilting ostinato. This structure continues until the end of

¹²⁵ In this transcription, slur markings indicate the appearance of the four note lilting pattern native to Chichibu *Yatai-bayashi*. Lines above/below noteheads, meanwhile, indicate that the note is played louder than others.

I have chosen not to use the same rhythms for the ostinato lilt as in past transcriptions, for at the Chichibu Night Festival they do not always match up, owing to individual musicians’ performance choices. Thus, I have chosen to keep a straight beat throughout the transcription and use the slur markings.

the procession, when the musicians finish with a short series of set rhythms known as the *bukkiri* (see video clip “4-4-Chichibu Yatai-bayashi 3,” transcribed in Figure 39).

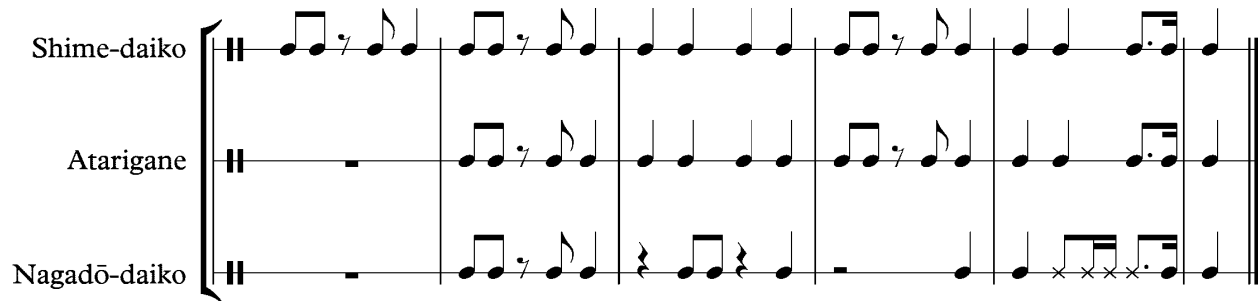


Figure 39. *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi bukkiri*

The various musical elements of *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi*, and indeed specific rhythmic patterns, are worth noting as they are presented to varying degrees in Ondekoza’s arrangement. Much like Sukeroku Taiko (who utilized Tokyo festival music in works like “Midare Uchi” and “Matsuri Daiko;” see Chapter 3.2.1, 3.4.3), Ondekoza took the regional music of Chichibu and arranged it into a form that could be performed on stage. Those changes that were made, however, resulted in a work with a different feel and form of presentation than that performed at the Chichibu Night Festival.

4.2.1 Arranging *Chichibu Yatai-Bayashi* for the stage

Chichibu Yatai-bayashi was first brought to Ondekoza’s home and training center on Sado in 1972 by Takano Ukichi, leader of a *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi hozonkai* (preservation society) that

won a national festival music contest in 1952.¹²⁶ He and his son Harumasa spent one week teaching Ondekoza members the basic performance practices of the Chichibu style; however, this workshop was not that successful, as the members had not yet gained the proper amount of technical skill needed to play the music (Bender 2012, 74). Nevertheless, Ondekoza members moved forward, spurred on by Den Tagayasu's desire for the performance style to be included in the group's repertoire. Hayashi Eitetsu, being the only member of the group with previous musical experience, transcribed everything that the Takanos had taught them so that it could be referenced in the future (Hayashi 1992, 60). Additionally, several members traveled to Chichibu in December 1972 to observe the Chichibu Night Festival, making audio recordings to take back to Sado. Bringing together their notes from their time with the Takanos, Hayashi's transcriptions, and these tapes, the group continued to practice the fundamental techniques needed for the piece.

At the same time, however, group members also considered how the festival music could be presented on stage (for that was the main goal for Ondekoza – stage performance). *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* would not necessarily work in its original form, as it is performed continuously with section breaks determined only by the motion of the float. As a result, Hayashi arranged the festival music to fit a concert setting. His first action was to adjust the basic rhythmic feel of the piece (a rather large change in and of itself). As mentioned earlier, the *shime-daiko* ostinato as played in Chichibu has a slight lilt to it, with a brief pause every four notes. However, Ondekoza members found themselves unable to replicate this feel, as Hayashi described in a 2012 letter:

Since there are slight differences in this bouncing element amongst the various parts of Chichibu (called something like “namari” in the local Chichibu dialect), I

¹²⁶ <http://www.takanoukichi.com/profile.html> (accessed August 22, 2012)

who was from outside the region was unable to perform it, and I made it so it was performed as a fast, steady rhythm without the feeling of that beat. That was all I could do at the time. (Personal communication, December 2012)

Hayashi and the other Ondekoza members were unable to pick up the rhythmic feel in their short time with the Takanos; thus, in order to present *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* on stage, Hayashi decided to straighten out the beat – that is, change it to a steady subdivision of a beat (Figure 40 - seen in video clip “4-5-Yatai-bayashi”).¹²⁷



Figure 40. The rhythmic ostinato in Ondekoza's arrangement "Yatai-bayashi"

As provided in a hand-written transcription by Hayashi Eitetsu (personal communication, December 2012)¹²⁸

Next, Hayashi arranged the musical content into a set form out of the original flexible sequence determined by spatial and motion considerations along the procession route. His actions were guided by several suggestions made by Den, including a request that the Ondekoza arrangement of the festival music utilize three *nagadō-daiko*. There was no musical reason behind this change; rather, Den was thinking in terms of stage presentation, the first of many

¹²⁷ Video clip “4-5-Yatai-bayashi” is taken from Kodo, *Live at Acropolis*, (Sony Music Entertainment (Japan), Inc., 1995), DVD, WD36862.

¹²⁸ It's unclear whether the original Ondekoza members used Western notation or *kuchi-shōga* (the rhythmic syllables used in the transmission of many drumming styles in Japan).

Hayashi's letter suggests that if he had more time, there might have been a chance that Ondekoza could have become able to mimic the lilt as it is played in Chichibu. However, given that Ondekoza's first performance was in January 1973 and the style was learned in 1972, time considerations caused him to straighten out the rhythm.

theatrical considerations that would occur as Ondekoza arranged regional festival musics. This process echoes both what Oguchi Daihachi did when creating repertoire for Osuwa Daiko (see Chapter 2.2) and the orchestration elements used by Sukeroku Taiko members when they arranged Tokyo festival music (Chapter 3.4): the theatrical nature of the performance took precedence over adherence to the performance practices of the original.

In order to acquiesce to this request for the use of three drums, while still attempting to maintain the general order of the music as it is performed in Chichibu, Hayashi arranged the work so that each *nagadō-daiko* player played the *ō-nami/ko-nami* cycle in sequence; once one player was done, the next would begin (much like one drummer takes over for another during the procession). The performance of *ō-nami/ko-nami* cycle in this arrangement follows the general practices of the festivals: the length is left to each drummer, as are the specific rhythms, but the general compositional flow is similar to that performed in Chichibu (see Figure 33). After all three *nagadō-daiko* players are finished, the piece continues into the *tamaire shime-daiko* feature, arranged for two players. Unlike the original *tamaire* – which is completely improvised – Hayashi chose to have a set rhythmic pattern performed (albeit one that uses many of the rhythms found in a *tamaire* as performed in Chichibu), noting that “since the adlib element varied depending on who played it, there was not a set way of learning it, and there were differences every time even if the same person was performing, it was extremely hard for people who had not listened since childhood to learn it in a short period of time” (Hayashi 1992, 59). A set pattern, then, was easier for those members just learning *wadaiko* performance practices, while also avoiding some of the difficulties that arose when comparing different performers’ playing styles.

Following the *shime-daiko tamaire* series, the *nagadō-daiko* players re-enter, playing as one group another *ō-nami/ko-nami* sequence with a set series of rhythmic patterns, before the piece finishes with the *bukkiri* ending (same as performed in Chichibu, shown above in Figure 35).¹²⁹ With this framework in place, the group set out to master the piece, making slight changes as each individual's input was considered. At the same time, Den continued to make recommendations in terms of staging and presentation, creating a product for the concert stage. Whereas in the Chichibu Night Festival the drums are all placed in a room, in accordance to Den's stage direction the three *nagadō-daiko* were placed in a row in the front of the stage. As such, the focus was placed on the *nagadō-daiko*, its unique stand, and how it was played; some alternations were made to the playing technique – larger motions, a slightly different sitting position – that enhanced the physical nature of the playing, a demonstration of the fruits of the members' intense training born from Den's tenet that "the taiko could not be sounded impressively without a powerful body" (Bender 2012, 65). The *shime-daiko* players, *atarigane* player, and *fue* player were positioned in the rear – clearly, the focus was on the *nagadō-daiko*. In time, due to the order of the concert program, the *nagadō-daiko* players would wear *fundoshi*, or loincloths (an occurrence tied to the development of another piece, "O-daiko," as the two pieces were often played in sequence; see below for more about that piece and the adoption of the loincloth as performance wear). These staging considerations helped to bring the music out of a festival setting, where presentation is not that important, and into a theatrical setting where the audience's perspective must be taken into account.

¹²⁹ A variant of this arrangement, often played by Kodo in the present era, features a short transition following the first unison *ō-nami/ko-nami*, in which the stage lights drop and the *shime-daiko* continue, before the *nagadō-daiko* players reenter once more.

The result of this effort was “Yatai-bayashi,” an arrangement of *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* – which might be played for hours at a time – into a compressed piece lasting approximately ten minutes. It was first performed at a private gathering on Sado in January 1973, with the arrangement’s first public performance taking place at the Shibuya Public Hall in Tokyo in September 1973 (personal communication with Hayashi Eitetsu, December 2012). The creation of Ondekoza’s “Yatai-bayashi” was a crucial development in the evolution of *wadaiko* music. It was the first time that the festival music was presented on stage as it is performed in its native region, integrating more than just performance technique or general organization. Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko both utilized elements taken from local festival music traditions, but would often hearken to them thematically rather than presenting the original rhythms.¹³⁰ With “Yatai-bayashi,” however, the musical content of the original festival music – the *ō-nami*, *ko-nami*, *tamairi*, and *bukkiri* rhythms – is present and easily recognizable, following the map laid out by performers on floats at the Chichibu Night Festival.

At the same time, however, those changes that Hayashi did make for Ondekoza’s “Yatai-bayashi” are important in their own right. Hayashi’s decision to alter the underlying beat of the piece reflects the troubles that Ondekoza members encountered when attempting to learn various regional festival musics; in essence, the members were attempting to master in a short time performance practices that were acquired over a lifetime from the people native to the different regions. Inevitably, changes were made in order to fit the varying skill levels and experiences; at the same time, given that orally transmitted music that is learned over the course of many years

¹³⁰ “Midare Uchi” could be said to be an exception to this statement, but as noted in Chapter 3 it is a variation on *bon daiko* rather than a presentation of the festival drumming as played during *bon odori*.

had to be learned in a short period of time, time considerations also took precedence, as Hayashi and the others determined what they could master in the time they had.

Further, many of the changes took place for theatrical considerations rather than musical ones. The “revitalization of folk arts” espoused by Den was in practice the arrangement of the music for stage performance. The theatrical nature of a concert often took precedent over the presentation of an art as it is found in its native region. Audiences were being introduced to regional festival music, but not in their original incarnations; rather, they saw Ondekoza’s version of the style. This interplay between revitalization and theatrics would reveal itself in an even broader fashion when Den asked Hayashi to arrange a regional style from Fukui Prefecture for stage presentation while also being influenced by images he had seen in a movie. His request would have an even greater impact on the development of *wadaiko* music than the simple arrangement of *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* for the stage, resulting in the creation of new performance techniques.

4.3 “O-DAIKO”: NEW TECHNIQUES FOR WADAIKO

One of the many performers brought in by Den to teach regional arts to the fledgling Ondekoza members was Shitamura Keiichi, who in 1971 visited Sado from the town of Mikuni in Fukui Prefecture (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 107). He introduced the group to a drumming style called *hi no taiko*, used during a ritual in which musicians travel through the rice fields to rid them of harmful insects. The drumming consists of interplay between two drummers, with one player playing a steady supporting rhythm as the other plays accented rhythmic patterns while integrating various choreographic movements (Bender 2012, 88).

Den asked Hayashi to arrange this style for stage performance while also adding to his request the integration of some elements he had seen in a movie. Den had been greatly impacted by a scene from a 1958 film *Muhōmatsu no Isshō* (“The Life of the Outrageous Matsu,” released in the United States in 1960 as “The Rickshaw Man”), about a rickshaw driver at the end of the 19th century. In the scene, set during the Kokura Gion Festival in Kokura, modern day Fukuoka Prefecture, the title character Muhomatsu (played by Mifune Toshiro) decides to show the teacher of a boy that he had befriended “the real Kokura Gion Daiko.” He hops on a float carrying a large *nagadō-daiko* that was being drawn through the streets and begins to play, making wild motions as he hits the drum and generally making merry.

Bender notes that Den saw this performance as an embodiment of “the ideal taiko player,” fitting neatly with his interest in folk performance and his “concern for the disappearing culture of the artisan” (Bender 2012, 87). However, the concept of a large drum on a cart that was pulled around the town was an invention created for the movie, and according to Hayashi Eitetsu the actor Mifune “only went through the motions of the drum... in reality, the hitting style in the movie wasn’t truly hitting the drum” (personal communication, December 2012). Nevertheless, the scene greatly affected Den; when Ondekoza received a large *ō-daiko* as a gift from a supporter, he had a cart built for the drum and asked Hayashi to reproduce the scene on the *ō-daiko*. In particular, Den had one stage direction that was immediately influenced by the film:

He had the drummers position the drum so that its side, not its front, faced the audience, thus highlighting the movements of the drummers and their drum mallets and mimicking the camera angle in the 1958 version of the film. (Bender 2012, 88)

As Hayashi began to develop this piece, however, he found that he was hesitant to simply adapt *hi no taiko*. Feeling that “if [he] were to make something that was to be heard on stage, where the *matsuri*-like atmosphere is not present, then actually the movements became a barrier,” and he decided not to integrate the choreography of the drumming style into his arrangement (Hayashi 1992, 49). Additionally, he found himself troubled by the performance techniques of not only *hi no taiko* but also *The Rickshaw Man*, in which the drummer stands parallel to the drum and hits across the body. Hayashi felt he could not use all of his strength when hitting across his body, an important consideration given the size of the drum that Ondekoza had been given. Thus, he decided to change the stance. After some experimentation, he decided to face the drum head on, lowering his body so that his arms had to be raised slightly in order to hit the middle of the drumhead. The resulting performance stance presented a striking image that accentuated the physical nature of playing the *ō-daiko* (Figure 41).



Figure 41. A member of Ondekoza playing the *ō-daiko* using the performance technique developed by Hayashi Eitetsu

Photo by Flickr user specialoperations

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/johnji/6959639507/>(accessed January 20, 2013)

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This stance, combined with a stand that places the drum horizontally with the center of the drumhead at or above eye level, was a major innovation in the world of *wadaiko*, the introduction of a brand-new performance technique. It is something not found in any regional performance tradition or in classical music, but rather was created by Hayashi especially for Ondekoza's stage performances, taking into consideration the presentation of the drum in a theatrical environment as well as the limits of Hayashi's own body. Indeed, it was the first performance practice developed for stage presentation by members of a *wadaiko* group since Oguchi Daihachi's taiko set (see Chapter 2.2), a major development in a genre that primarily used techniques from festival and theatrical musical traditions. Even the signature choreographic style utilized by Sukeroku Taiko in "Yodan Uchi" was a combination of movements developed for *bon daiko* and ones taken from Korean drumming, not original but an adaption. With the

development of this new style for *ō-daiko*, Hayashi created a new performance technique that would have a lasting impact on *wadaiko*, representing a step away from performance practices based solely on Japanese folk or classical drumming.¹³¹

This new technique in place, Hayashi next set out to arrange the music into something appropriate for the stage. He arranged the two-drummer interplay of *hi no taiko* into an extended improvisation utilizing both sides of the drum: as later described in a publication by Kodo, the successor group to Ondekoza (discussed later in this chapter), “the performer on the front side of the drum plays freely over the continuing base rhythm (*ura-uchi*) performed by the performer in the rear” (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 107). Because it featured the *ō-daiko*, the piece was given the simple name “O-daiko.”

A typical performance of “O-daiko” opens with a solo by a wind instrument – such as a *fue* or a *shakuhachi* – as two drummers enter the stage and climb onto the float, one moving to each side of the *ō-daiko*. They then assume the pose developed by Hayashi, facing the *ō-daiko*, spreading their legs, and lowering their center of gravity so that their head is approximately level with the center of the drum. Originally, the float was positioned on stage so that both players could be seen by the audience; in time, however, Ondekoza members also experimented with having it moved so that the soloist (the person playing the side considered as the “front side of the drum”) had his back to the audience (as seen in Figure 36).

As the *fue* player continues to play, the drummers slowly bring their drumsticks up from their sides, carefully and deliberately moving as to accent the motion. They begin to play slowly,

¹³¹ Unfortunately, Hayashi’s contribution has gone largely unrecognized in the larger *wadaiko* world. The style has come to be used by many performers, and known by even more, but few performers know its history. It has evolved from a unique performance style into the standard way that one plays an *ō-daiko*.

beginning with single loud hits. Eventually, the two drummers begin a slow build, playing a steady beat in which cycles of notes – typically eight – rise in volume from soft to loud before getting soft again, with the tempo gradually increasing each cycle (Figure 42).

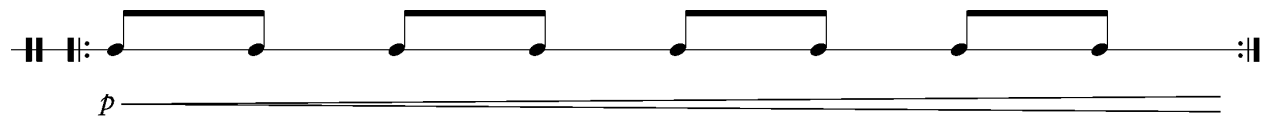


Figure 42. The cyclical beat at the beginning of "O-daiko"

It is worth noting here that there have been several primary soloists for “O-daiko” throughout the history of Ondekoza and its successor group Kodo. Hayashi Eitetsu was the primary soloist during the 1970s. When Ondekoza members formed Kodo and Hayashi subsequently left the group (discussed later in this chapter), Ondekoza founding member Fujimoto Yoshikazu became the primary soloist. When Fujimoto stopped touring with the group in the latter part of the first decade of the 21st Century, he was succeeded by Nakagome Kenta, Kodo’s current primary “O-daiko” soloist. Other performers featured in recording and in concert in recent years have included Mitome Tomohiro and Ishizuka Mitsuru. However, given a similarity in the construction of improvisations, I am confident in using a composite idea gleaned from these different soloists to present a general overview of “O-daiko” practices.

The preparatory motions at the beginning of “O-daiko” vary depending on the performer, with some settling into several different poses before finally reaching the playing position. For example, Fujimoto Yoshikazu would hold the drumsticks on each side of the drum before bringing them to the center, down, and again out to the edges in a circular motion; he would then move the drumsticks back into the center before, after a moment of non-movement, finally hitting the drum.

Once the initial cycle of soft to loud hits reaches a certain tempo, the rear/accompanying player starts a steady ostinato as the front/soloing player begins to freely improvise. It is only in the ostinato played by the secondary drummer that the *hi no taiko* origins of “O-daiko” are still present, as it uses basic patterns performed by the accompanying player in *hi no taiko* (Figure 43).



Figure 43. Two standard accompaniment rhythms in "O-daiko," also found in *hi no taiko*

A typical “O-daiko” improvisation fits within the rhythmic foundation laid by the accompanying player. While the content varies depending on the performer, there are some common traits found in most solos. The musical content of the improvisation is shaped largely by the relationship between accented and unaccented notes (such as the opening passage of a solo by Fujimoto Yoshikazu transcribed in Figure 44 below). Additionally, the primary drummer will occasionally play long stretches of single loud notes, emphasizing the physical nature of playing the *ō-daiko* rather than more complex rhythmic patterns. Indeed, there is a limit to how fast and rhythmically complex – that is, the rhythmic density – a performer can get during their improvisation due to the size of the drum, the size of the drumsticks with which it is played, and the sheer physicality of hitting the drum. The “O-daiko” solo is very physically demanding, requiring great strength and endurance. In many regards, it is the ultimate expression of Den’s conviction that “the taiko could not be sounded impressively without a powerful body” (Bender 2012, 65).



Figure 44. An excerpt from an "O-daiko" improvisation, as performed by Fujimoto Yoshikazu¹³²

In the middle of the improvisation, the drumming is enhanced by metal percussion instruments like the *atarigane* or *chappa* (small handheld cymbals used in various regional festival musics) playing the same accompanying rhythm as the rear secondary drummer. Eventually, the soloist stops momentarily and the accompanying ostinato continues alone, before the soloist embarks on one final whirlwind of drumming.¹³³

At first, Den did not approve of the differences "O-daiko" had from his original vision, being so greatly affected by *The Rickshaw Man*. He changed his mind, however, when the piece was warmly received by audiences. And yet, the piece was not complete; there were still some elements to be added. In the spring of 1975, Ondekoza played a series of concerts at the Espace

¹³² Owing to the free nature of the improvisation, this transcription does not have time signatures, but rather uses bar lines to indicate metric divisions as they are felt within the solo.

¹³³ A promotional video posted by Kodo on YouTube features an excerpt from "O-daiko" – solo by Mitome Tomohiro – taken from the end of a performance. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Io1tum_7jio (accessed December 29, 2012)

Pierre Cardin in Paris, owned by fashion designer Pierre Cardin, and it was during this series that the final period in the development of “O-daiko” took place. Prior to this concert series, the piece had been performed by members in the standard normal performance wear of *wadaiko* groups that mirrored that worn by participants in festivals across Japan (such as that seen in Figures 24 and 32). However, after one performance, Cardin made the suggestion of having the “O-daiko” soloist perform in a type of *fundoshi* (loincloth) typically associated with *sumo* wrestling. According to Bender, this idea stemmed from an appearance by Ondekoza at the Hadaka Matsuri in Okamaya city in western Japan, famous for the presence of “thousands of men dressed only in *fundoshi*... as they jockey for sacred sticks hurled into the crowd by priests” (Bender 2012, 91). The group performed in the loincloths in an effort to maintain the spirit of the festival, and an image from this performance was used in publicity for the Paris concerts. The response was largely positive, and the custom of performing “O-daiko” in a *fundoshi* began (Figure 45).



Figure 45. A member of Kodo playing the *ō-daiko* in a *fundoshi*

Photo by Flickr user crhissam42

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/crissam42/2798599342/> (accessed January 20, 2013)

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The relationship between the adoption of the use of the loincloth during “O-daiko” and the rise of its popularity suggests that the popularity of the piece may be somewhat due to the physical nature of its performance. It is an idea that has been explored by scholars like Shawn Bender and Paul Yoon, who argue that the work’s popularity is as much due to its evocation of masculinity as to its musical content (see Bender 2010; Yoon 2009). Whatever the reason, “O-daiko” is clearly one of the most popular pieces developed during this early period in Ondekoza’s history. Even today, the crowd becomes noticeably exciting when the loincloth-clad soloist climbs onto the *ō-daiko* cart, and the cheers after a performance of a piece are as loud if not louder than any others heard during a concert.

Beyond audience reception, “O-daiko” has had an impact on many other *wadaiko* groups. It was the first time that an entire piece was dedicated to an extended improvisation on a single drum. There were works that were largely improvisational, such as Sukeroku Taiko’s “Midare

Uchi,” but the length of the “O-daiko” solo sets it apart. Further, before the emergence of this piece the *ō-daiko* was used as a regular part of the ensemble; certainly, this was the case in Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko repertoire. Additionally, it was rare to see a drum much larger than a *nagadō-daiko*, and certainly not the size of the one featured in Ondekoza performances. After “O-daiko” became popular, however, the drum gained a more special place in the ensemble. A number of other Japanese groups moved to purchase a larger-sized *ō-daiko* that could be played using Hayashi’s new technique and began to compose pieces highlighting this manner of performance; Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, for example, created an *ō-daiko* feature piece called “Edo no Kaze” (“Edo Wind”).

In program notes, the composer for “O-daiko” would be listed as “Traditional” – in later years, after Ondekoza members became Kodo (see later in this chapter), this would be adapted to “Traditional, arranged by Kodo.” It is unclear why this change occurred, although it may have been related to confusion that rose out of the popularity of “Yatai-bayashi.” As explained by Hayashi:

The success of [“Yatai-bayashi”] gave rise to confusion in the original location of Chichibu. That is because it resulted in the rise of a situation where people who were moved upon the “Yatai-bayashi” that I arranged, upon traveling to hear the real regional *matsuri-bayashi*, were all disappointed. There was also opposition amongst the local performers of the *matsuri-bayashi*. (Personal communication, December 2012)

This opposition and confusion caused Hayashi to stop creating arrangements, not referring to a piece as “traditional” even if it used “a motif from a song from traditional performing arts” (Personal communication, December 2012). Perhaps for the same reason – confusion at the

original festivals, and opposition from the native performers – Kodo changed the attribution to acknowledge the input of Ondekoza and Kodo performers in the creation of the work performed in concert.

In practice, the rhythms performed by the player on the back side of the drum are the only connections “O-daiko” has with regional drumming, given that its content is largely improvised. At the same time, however, it is hard to make a direct connection with one particular style. While the accompanying rhythms (transcribed below in Figure 43) are indeed used in *hi no taiko*, they are also used in many other regional drumming styles as fundamental accompanying rhythms. Further, as has been discussed, the performance practices used in this piece are an original creation for Ondekoza concerts, not reflective of how *ō-daiko* is used in different festival or theatrical settings.

Unlike “Yatai-bayashi,” which has a clear point of origin, the “traditional” nature of “O-daiko” is unclear. Rather, it might be said that the generalized “Traditional” attribution in program notes is an attempt to connect to a greater discourse of tradition in relation to *wadaiko* performance, much in the same way that Oguchi Daihachi created a discourse of ‘revival’ in relation to Osuwa Daiko performances (see Chapter 1.4). Given Den Tagayasu’s intention to revitalize regional drumming traditions, it was more fitting to describe “O-daiko” as ‘traditional’ and latch on to whatever remaining connections the work had with older performance traditions. As such, the individual contributions of the performers and the contemporary nature of the performance practice were sublimated in favor of the perception of Ondekoza as the revitalizers of tradition.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ This might also explain to some extent why Hayashi’s contributions are not as well-known as perhaps they should be.

And yet, despite this discourse “O-daiko” paved the way for a mode of *wadaiko* performance and composition that was less reliant on arrangements of regional folk music. Indeed, as Ondekoza continued to develop, the group moved further away from its original goal of revitalizing folk music and began performing more complex, original compositions. This evolution – one that would have an impact on the development of *wadaiko* music as a whole – was further aided by a meeting between Den and composer Ishii Maki that would lead to the creation of one of the most unique pieces in the *wadaiko* repertoire: “Monochrome.”

4.4 “MONOCHROME”: WADAIKO AS ART MUSIC

Among the friends Den Tagayasu had made in the years leading up to Ondekoza’s United States debut at the Boston Marathon in 1975 was Ozawa Seiji, a conductor who in 1973 was named Music Director of the Boston Symphony. Following Ondekoza’s performances in Boston, Ozawa introduced Den to Ishii Maki. A German-trained composer based in Berlin who had studied twelve-tone technique under pupils of Schoenberg, Ishii had begun to investigate the potential for blending Japanese and Western musical techniques following an early 1960s encounter with *shōmyō* (a type of Buddhist chant found only in Japan) and *gagaku* (Japanese ritual court music). He experimented with the inclusion of Japanese musical elements into a Western classical music setting, seeking to “incorporate various devices which establish contact between the idioms of western and eastern music” (Ishii 1997, 27). One such work in which he explored this concept was “Sō-Gū II,” a juxtaposition of *gagaku* and Western orchestral music in which music for the orchestra and music for the *gagaku* ensemble are performed simultaneously, premiered in 1971 by The Japan Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Ozawa Seiji.

Among the many techniques Ishii used in his search for a new form of musical expression blending Western and Japanese elements was an increased emphasis on percussion instruments, so important to Japanese music but relatively under-developed in Western classical music until the beginning of the 20th Century. He was particularly interested in “the intrinsic, elemental power and the richly expressive potential of these instruments” (Ishii 1997, 53). Thus, when he was approached by Den – who himself was contemplating a collaboration with Western orchestra – to write a new piece for Ondekoza, Ishii jumped at the opportunity.

Ishii travelled to Sado and spent six months with Ondekoza members; during this time, he “devised new techniques totally unfamiliar to these drummers, and requested them to practise until these techniques had entered their very blood and bones” (Ishii 1997, 57). This was a completely different experience for the members, whose activities up to this point had been limited to Japanese folk and theatrical drumming; indeed, this was a major step forward for *wadaiko* performance in general, the continued exploration of what new sounds a single taiko might be capable of producing and how that might be accomplished. The members worked to satisfy Ishii’s demands as he continued to experiment, molding his ideas into a new composition.

The result of those six months of work was “Monochrome, for Japanese Drums and gongs, op. 28,” premiered at the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan in February 1976 as part of the music festival Panmusik Festival Tokyo (founded by Ishii). “Monochrome” was a major breakthrough in the development of *wadaiko* music; not only was it the first time that an outside composer had written music for a *wadaiko* group, but it was the first work written by a Western-trained composer. Ishii’s approach to music was quite different to what the Ondekoza members were used to, the first time they had encountered what they called “a Western music-oriented approach, with rhythms different from traditional taiko, as they tried to embody a musical form

of expression” (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 58). Among the many techniques utilized in the piece is “a proliferation of continuous drum strokes beginning from *pppp*, and flawless repetition by the ensemble of different figures with contrasting accentuation” (Akiyama 1997, 169).

“Monochrome” is written for seven *shime-daiko*, three *nagadō-daiko* (indicated in the score as “Chichibu-Daiko,” hinting at the influence of Ondekoza’s “Yatai-bayashi” arrangement), two *ō-daiko*, and two large gongs (*dō*) hung on metal stands.¹³⁵ The beginning of the piece is characterized by moments of extreme quiet that built up to extreme loudness, complemented with quiet ostinatos (marked *pianissimo*) with occasional accented rhythms that gradually build up to *mezzo-forte* before dropping back to near-nothingness. These accented rhythms vary according to the player, resulting in an intricate combination of sounds in which all seven players fit within a larger rhythmic whole (see video clip “4-6-Monochrome 1;” a page from this section, containing the rhythms found in the video, can be seen in Figure 46).¹³⁶

¹³⁵ In most performances, however, the section involving the *ō-daiko* is not played, indicated as “Version B” in the printed score. Maki Ishii, “Monochrome for Japanese Drums and Gongs Op. 29 (1976),” (Celle, Lower Saxony, Germany: Moeck Verlag und Musikinstrumentenwerk, 1989).

¹³⁶ This and other video clips of “Monochrome” are taken from the DVD Kodo, *Live at Acropolis*.

2

The image displays two systems of a musical score for seven staves, numbered 1 through 7 on the left. The first system shows staves 1 through 7. Staves 1, 2, 3, and 4 are mostly empty, with a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic marking at the beginning of each. Staff 5 has a few notes at the end. Staff 6 has a *pp* marking. Staff 7 contains a continuous line of notes, with some notes having stems down and others having stems up. A vertical dashed line is placed between staves 4 and 5. The second system continues from the first. Staves 1 and 2 have notes starting after the dashed line. Staff 3 is empty. Staff 4 has notes starting after the dashed line. Staff 5 has notes starting after the dashed line, with a *> simile* marking above it. Staff 6 has notes starting after the dashed line. Staff 7 has notes starting after the dashed line. A vertical dashed line is placed between staves 2 and 3 in the second system.

Figure 46. Excerpt from Ishii Maki's "Monochrome"

Published by Moeck Verlag und Musikinstrumentenwerk (Ishii 1989); Score excerpt used with permission

In this passage, noteheads with stems down represent quiet continuation of the ostinato, while those with noteheads up are accented notes (notated with accents in the beginning of each passage, and continued per the “*simile*” marking above each line).

This is followed by an aleatoric series altering the carefully-laid rhythmic foundation that characterizes the opening of the piece. In one section, each player accelerates and slows down

the repeated ostinato before returning to the original tempo; the resulting imbalance is almost unnoticeable at first, but as more players move out of the ostinato and began manipulating the tempo the strict metric feel that previously dominated the music is disrupted. In another section, each drummer lets their *bach*i bounce quietly on the stick head, the rhythm determined by the manner in which gravity works on the drumstick and resulting in a sound similar to rain; during this section, the gongs enter, adding a different sonic spectrum to the performance.

Ishii moves further into the realm of aleatoric music in two other passages from this section, asking players to choose seventeen different rhythms that combined volume hits, hits on the drumhead and the rim, and rhythmic variations (a clip from the final aleatoric section can be seen in video clip “4-7-Monochrome 2;” Figure 47 contains the patterns available to performers in this section). The order in which players perform the patterns is left up to the individual, as long as they play them for an allotted amount of time and do not repeat the same pattern until they have played all possible options.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ The use of free notation in this section (indicated in Figure 47) – that is, not on a staff and thus set apart from the strictly-composed music found in other elements – is a common practice in aleatoric music.

〈TONGRUPPEN B=音群B〉

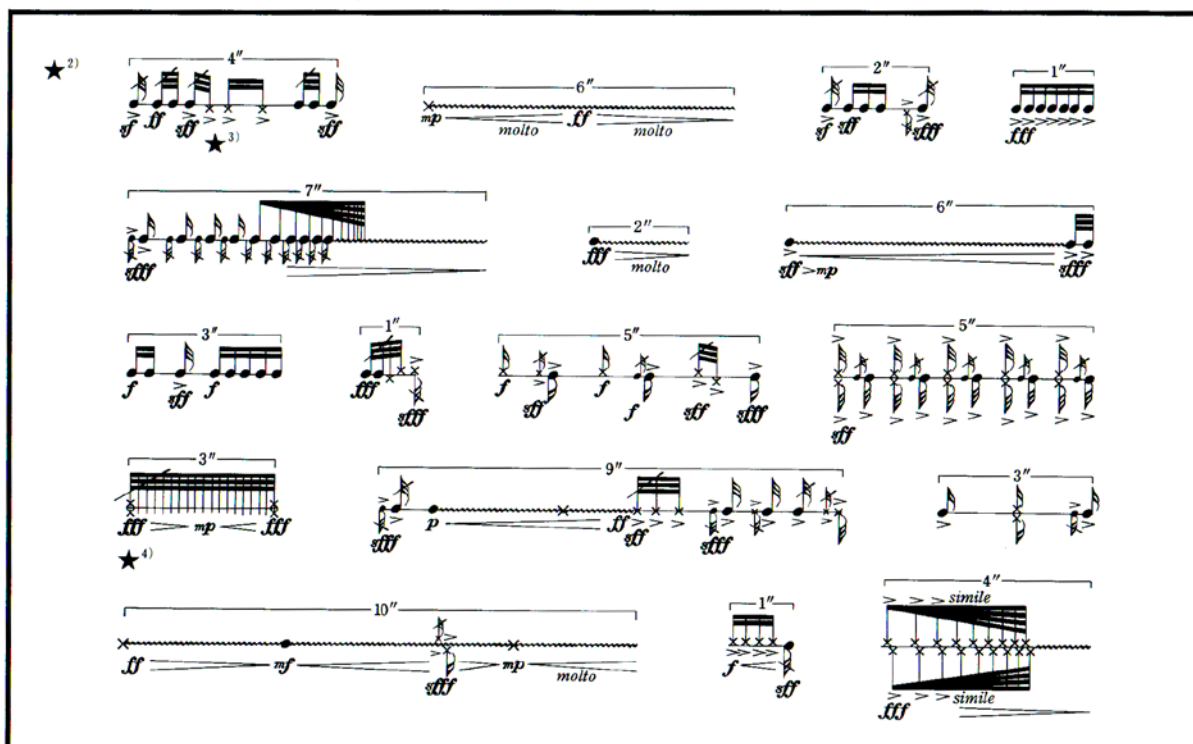


Figure 47. An aleatoric passage from "Monochrome," listing seventeen musical gestures from which players can choose

(Ishii 1989); Used with permission

The final section of "Monochrome" is signaled by a move by three players to the *nagadō-daiko*, where they begin a passage influenced by "Yatai-bayashi" (discussed in Chapter 4.2). The remaining *shime-daiko* players continue for a time their aleatoric patterns before one by one settling into the ostinato from "Yatai-bayashi." Meanwhile, each *nagadō-daiko* player first performs individual variations on the "Yatai-bayashi" *o-nami/k-nami* sequences – the rhythms written in the score – before eventually synchronizing their playing, building up to the end of the piece (Figure 48 contains the very end of the individual *nagadō-daiko* variations as well as the synchronized part that ends the piece, beginning at marker 23; seen in video clip "4-8-Monochrome 3").



Figure 48. The final measures of "Monochrome"

The top three lines are played on *nagadō-daiko*; the bottom three, *shime-daiko*.

(Ishii 1989); Used with permission

“Monochrome” is unlike anything composed to that point for *wadaiko*. The integration of aleatoric elements brought Western classical musical practices into the *wadaiko* world (building upon the jazz influence that had guided many of Oguchi Daihachi’s experimentations), and the rhythmic construction, dynamic considerations, and other compositional techniques were unlike

anything else found in *wadaiko* repertoire. At the same time, the sonic dimensions of a performance is unmatched; each loud hit of the *shime-daiko* that passes between the players, each quiet interplay between *accelerando*, *ritardando*, and *a tempo*, is affected by the acoustical properties of the performance space in which the piece is heard, an approach that had been utilized by composers of Western art music but had never been a factor in *wadaiko* performance. Further, “Monochrome” stands apart for its use of theatrical elements only possible in concert halls. Different sections are accompanied by changing in lighting – the opening, for example, is dimly light, getting brighter as the players increase the dynamics of their playing and dimming again as the dynamics go back down. Additionally, spotlights are often used to bring attention to particular players or instruments.

The inclusion of rhythms taken from “Yatai-bayashi” (both the ostinato and the *ō-nami/ko-nami* sequence), meanwhile, is a continuation of Ishii’s attempts to meld Japanese and Western musical elements. However, unlike previous attempts in which Ishii juxtaposed different elements in simultaneous performance, with “Monochrome” he made the Japanese elements part of the overall rhythmic scheme of the piece. This is particularly evident in the latter section of the work when three drummers move from *shime-daiko* to *nagadō-daiko*. The stands on which the *nagadō-daiko* are placed, as well as the rhythms used in the section, help to identify the elements as having been taken from “Yatai-bayashi,” but they are means to an end, musical ideas to be used for a greater musical purpose rather than elements to be contrasted with another musical idea (although, for a time, the aleatoric section overlaps with the “Yatai-bayashi” quotation).¹³⁸

¹³⁸ To some extent, this hearkens back the manner in which Sukeroku Taiko used elements of *Edo-bayashi* festival music in their own compositions (as described in Chapter 3.4).

“Monochrome” brought Ondekoza – indeed, *wadaiko* in general – into a new musical world, helping the group to be recognized by a wider audience interested as much in “modern music” as in “Japanese music.” Indeed, Hayashi Eitetsu holds this development in high regard in relation to the continued evolution of *wadaiko* repertoire:

Musically-speaking, I believe that the minimal rhythmic elements presented in their bare essence as in minimalism, the rhythmic syncopation of the *nagadō-daiko*, and the dynamics that grow from softest to loudest had a strong impact on contemporary audiences and thus was accepted. That form of presentation is nothing that had been expressed by Japanese taiko to that point and was a landmark event. That characteristic, through “Monochrome” and the technique of contemporary music, spread even further musically. (Personal communication, December 2012)

Ishii would follow up “Monochrome” with “Mono-prism,” for *wadaiko* group and Western symphonic orchestra, taking many of the same ideas of “Monochrome” and applying them in an orchestral setting; the *wadaiko* ensemble is accompanied by an orchestral score that is at times atonal and integrates elements of aleatoric composition.¹³⁹ With these two works, and in especially “Monochrome,” *wadaiko* entered into a new realm of performance; Ondekoza was performing not just folk music, but art music as well – that is, music that is written down (a score

¹³⁹ “Mono-prism” was debuted in 1976 at the Tanglewood Music Festival in Massachusetts, with Ondekoza and the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Ozawa Seiji. Kodo Cultural Foundation, *Inochi Moyashite, Tatakeyo. -Kodo 30-Nen No Kiseki - いのちもやして、たたけよ。－鼓童 30 年の軌跡－* [Light Your Fire and Play - Kodo's 30 Year Journey] (Tokyo: Shuppan Bunka Sha Corporation, 2011), 59.

for “Monochrome” has been published, a rarity for *wadaiko* repertoire) and utilizes advanced structural and compositional techniques. The development of Ondekoza’s repertoire and creation of “Monochrome” was, then, the development of *wadaiko* music as a whole.

4.5 ONDEKOZA ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

More than any group that came before, Ondekoza meshed a variety of musical styles into a musical form to be performed by a *wadaiko* ensemble. Beyond bringing together folk and classical styles, they also included Western musical influences and a number of original performance techniques. As Ondekoza toured, members further refined their program and performance technique, creating a style meant for the concert stage. By integrating the various styles that they had learned, they provided a varied program that exposed audiences to the many realms of Japanese traditional arts. Music and dance alike were part of the Ondekoza repertoire, with musical selection not just being limited to drums but also including *fue* and shamisen. This was a great contrast to the performance styles of Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko, who limited their activities to drumming.¹⁴⁰ By learning many different performance traditions (not just limiting themselves to music), Ondekoza members were able to create a much more varied program that they could perform around the world.

¹⁴⁰ It might be argued that Sukeroku Taiko’s “Midare Uchi” and “Yodan Uchi” are more rooted in motion than other pieces, but they are still drumming-first works. Some pieces in the Ondekoza repertoire featured dancers alone, or drummers and dancers, offering a different type of product.

Similarly, some Osuwa Daiko pieces include *fue*, but these are in the minority, and the drums are clearly at the center of the performance.

OndeKOZA quickly gained the world's attention, and looked to direct that attention towards a more intense touring schedule. In early 1976, an article in the Tokyo-based English newspaper *The Japan Times* reported that by the end of the decade the group planned to travel to "some 50 countries" ("Sado Folk Music Group to Perform in Tokyo" 1976). The group participated in the Boston Marathon again in April 1976, and in June of that year began a four-month tour of the United States. By this time the group had developed a full program of pieces that was limited to not only taiko but included dance, flute, and the many other arts that the group had been learning from the assorted artisans that had traveled to Sado. A May 11 article from the *Boston Evening Globe* included one description of the group's program, demonstrating the wide range of artistic ventures presented in their concerts:

Their opening piece was a delicate story in which the characters imitate Bunraku puppets, the chief one being a young girl manipulated through veils of snowflakes by the puppeteers who, after the conventions of the genre, are clad in black and are therefore invisible. Following a flute interlude, sustaining this mood, a Kurosawa-like masked sword dance involves severe, angular gestures not unlike the religious dances of Southeast Asia. Finally, the second half of the program, centered around the huge drums, created continuous pandemonium. (Taylor 1976)

By 1978, the group settled into a rigid touring schedule, being on the road continuously for five months, performing four times a week (Bender 2012, 96). Unfortunately, the increased performance schedule undertaken by OndeKOZA was also accompanied by the beginning of troubles within the group. From the start of activities the group had engaged in a number of other, non-musical projects, including several TV and film documentaries. In 1979, production for the latest movie documentary began, but members were beginning to have concerns about the

time and money costs. Perhaps more crucially, however, it did not appear that the initial goal of creating an artist's university still interested Den, nor did the goal of revitalizing traditional arts. As time went on, the group became simply a performance group, albeit a very busy group known throughout the world. Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko were known to some extent in the United States, but not to the degree that Ondekoza would gain attention; indeed, Ondekoza was the first *wadaiko* group to embark on a large-scale tour of North America.

At the same time, spurred on by their success on the world stage and their interactions with artists like Ishii Maki members wanted to focus more and more upon stage performance, while Den seemed to be more interested in the movies that he was commissioning (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 61). Eventually, Ondekoza performing members decided that if they wanted to continue to advance as musicians and as a performance troupe, their only own course was to split from Den. Following a confrontation, Den left for the city of Nagasaki, taking all the group's instruments and creating a 'new' Ondekoza (Bender 2012, 96).¹⁴¹ Acquiring new drums thanks to the help of the Asano Taiko drum manufacturing company (a long-time supporter of the group), the members continued for a time to perform under the name Ondekoza; they fulfilled a number of existing performance engagements before Den demanded that they quit doing so.

In 1981, the original members of Ondekoza officially recognized themselves into a new group. Hayashi proposed the name "Kodo" for the group, combining the Japanese characters for "drum" (*ko*) and "child" (*dō*) in an effort to reflect the idea of the sound of the taiko being

¹⁴¹ While this 'new' Ondekoza will mentioned occasionally in other chapters of this dissertation, it will not be given any deep attention. The group formed by the original members of Ondekoza has been more adventurous musically and theatrically, and indeed has had a greater impact on the continued development of *wadaiko* music.

similar to the heartbeat within a mother's womb (drawing upon stories he had heard of children falling asleep at Ondekoza concerts during *ō-daiko* solos) (Hayashi 1999, 53). The other members liked this idea, and the name Kodo was adopted for the continuation of activities.

4.6 KODO

With the members' newfound freedom, having complete control of their activities for the first time, they found themselves confronted by problems both organizational and artistic in nature. First, they moved to fill the gap in management left by Den's departure, with player Kawauchi Toshio – who helped guide the group during the transition and was a driving force in the restart of activities – becoming Kodo's first managing director. They soon encountered another major obstacle, however, when Hayashi Eitetsu decided to leave the group and pursue a solo career. Hayashi had been the primary creative force for much of Ondekoza's history, serving as a major contributor to the process of arranging works like “Yatai-bayashi” for stage performance; at the Ondekoza 10 year anniversary concert held in April 1981, which occurred after members split from Den but before the reformation as Kodo was announced, the group premiered several works composed or arranged by Hayashi.

Following the 10th Anniversary concert and a subsequent concert where the name Kodo was announced, Hayashi announced his decision to leave the group, citing divergent thoughts about the group's direction.¹⁴² This left a huge creative void, but the group was not completely without artistic direction. Indeed, Kodo's artistic direction ended up being not too different from

¹⁴² See Chapter 6 for more about this split, as well as Hayashi's activities after his transition to soloist.

that which members had pursued under the name Ondekoza, combining arrangements of regional drumming traditions and commissioned compositions (as well as an increasing number of works written by members). The ‘new’ group’s official world debut took place in September 1981 at a music festival in Berlin. In this concert and those that would follow (Kodo continued its practice of touring around the world for several months out of the year), the program featured many of the pieces that audiences had seen under the Ondekoza banner (including “Yatai-bayashi,” “Monochrome,” and “O-daiko”). At the same time, however, the group continued to explore new possibilities for performance that still fit within the identity that they had been developing since the early 1970s.

4.6.1 “Miyake” & Kodo’s Continued Arrangement of Regional Drumming Styles

Among the activities begun by Ondekoza that were continued by Kodo members was the arrangement of regional festival drumming styles for the stage. One piece that quickly began a standard part of Kodo performances was based on festival drumming from the island of Miyake, part of a chain of islands southeast of the main island of Honshu. This drumming is part of a procession during the Gozu Tennō Matsuri, a festival held every July in honor of the deity Gozu Tennō (a deity of the underworld in Buddhist mythology).¹⁴³ The festival drumming’s proper name is *Kiyari-daiko*, with the style taught to Kodo members by Tsumura Akio (Tsumura and Tsumura 2011).

During the procession on Miyake Island, a single *nagadō-daiko* is strapped to a long pole and carried by two bearers as another person plays the drum. The drums are placed on a low

¹⁴³ http://www.tsushima-kankou.com/festival/tenno_festival.html (accessed January 28, 2013)

stand or on no stand at all, supported just by the ropes around the drum and the pole. Occasionally (in assorted instances, such as when the procession is approaching the shrine), the bearers will place the drum on the ground and begin to play, placing the instrument mere inches from the ground and forcing the players to squat low in order to play the drums (Kodo's version of the low stand, as well as the stance taken by the players, can be seen in Figure 49).¹⁴⁴



Figure 49. Kodo members performing "Miyake"

Screenshot from a 2004 DVD. (Kodo 2004)

The visual nature of *kiyari-daiko* is worth noting, for like *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* the drumming from Miyake Island has a unique performance style. Indeed, both regional styles feature distinctive stands on which the *nagadō-daiko* are placed, and the performance practices

¹⁴⁴ A number of pictures from the Gozu Tennō Matsuri can be seen on the website of a *kiyari-daiko hozonkai* (preservation society). <http://www.kiyaridaiko.com/photo.html> (accessed January 28, 2013)

http://www.kiyaridaiko.com/_src/sc345/DSC01912.JPG shows processors carrying a *nagadō-daiko*, while http://www.kiyaridaiko.com/_src/sc337/DSC01892.JPG shows the drum being played during one stop.

Kiyari-daiko alternates between a set rhythmic pattern and solos. A drummer on one side of the drum plays the set rhythm (Figure 50) as another player on the other accompanies with a rhythmic ostinato. This rhythm is repeated several times, and then another drummer takes over. Following several cycles of the base rhythm, getting faster each time with players on each side of the drums switching between main and accompaniment, several drummers improvise, and then the end of the performance is signaled by a return to the original base rhythm.¹⁴⁵



¹⁴⁵ See video clip “4-9-Miyake” for an excerpt of “Miyake” as performed by Kodo in Tokyo in 2004. Released on DVD on Kodo, *One Earth Tour Special*, (Sony Music Japan International, Inc., 2004), CD/DVD, WD23420.

determined organization of the original *kiyari-daiko*. The numbers of drummers on the stage varies; in some concerts there may be six drummers playing three drums, while other performances may feature as many as five drums. One addition that was made to the original *Kiyari-daiko*, however, was that performances routinely open with the singing of a song, “Kiyari-uta,” prior to the drumming; on Miyake Island, this is sung either as the drum is being carried on the pole during the process, or at some point during the drumming when the tempo is slow. As a whole however, “Miyake” is a piece much in the spirit of “Yatai-bayashi,” an arrangement of a visually-interesting performance style for the concert stage.

4.6.2 Leonard Eto & “Irodori”

Even as Kodo members continued to arrange regional performance styles from the concert stage, the group also maintained its relationships with composers who had previously written works for Ondekoza; among the pieces debuted at the April 1981 performance in Tokyo was a new composition by Ishii Maki entitled “Dyu-ha” (“Entering a New Sphere,” a term taken from *gagaku* – “ha” is the middle section of the *jo-ha-kyū* structural framework found in many traditional Japanese arts, while “dyu” is a particular reading of the character meaning “entering”).¹⁴⁶ They also commissioned new works by composers that pushed the musical boundaries of their programs; one such work, “Chonlima,” by Tosha Roetsu (a *hōgaku* musician and composer, part of the same Tosha school of performance as Sukeroku Taiko founding member Tosha Kiyonari), features four drummers in a row each playing a *shime-daiko* and an

¹⁴⁶ “Dyu-ha” is another composition written for Kodo by Ishii for which a printed score has been published. Maki Ishii, “Dyu-Ha for Kodo, Op. 46,” (Moeck Verlag Celle, 1981).

katsugi okedō-daiko – a large cylindrical-shaped *shime-daiko* from the Tōhoku region of Japan first used in an arrangement of the *Kanatsuru Yanagawa Shishi Odori* festival drumming and dance from Iwate Prefecture called “Shishi Odori” (“Deer Dance,” named so because traditionally the drummers accompany dancers dressed like *shishi*, or deer) – with one more *nagadō-daiko* played by another drummer behind the front row. The *katsugi okedō-daiko* (“carried bucked-bodied drum”) as utilized in “Shishi Odori” is traditionally carried with a strap slung over one shoulder (Figure 51); before he left the group, Hayashi began to experiment with placing these drums on stands, and it was this stand-based configuration that Tosha utilized in his new composition.



**Figure 51. *Katsugi okedō-daiko*, as played by members of Kodo in Leonard Eto’s piece LION
Utilizing a style of drumming from Iwate Prefecture, also used in the arrangement “Shishi Odori”
Screenshot from a 1992 VHS. (Kodo 1992)**

The continued relationship with Ishii and collaborations with other composers like Tosha were important not just for the activities of Kodo but for the general growth of *wadaiko*

performance. It is in these pieces that composers experimented with different forms of presentation, just as Ishii Maki experimented in “Monochrome.” By commissioning these works and working with these composers, Kodo was helping to push *wadaiko* in different artistic directions. At the same time, these contributions by outside composers were accompanied in concert by new works by Kodo members. Following in Hayashi Eitetsu’s footsteps, members started creating their own works for the ensemble; indeed, Hayashi’s departure forced other members to fill the existing artistic void. In doing so, members began to explore a variety of musical possibilities.

As Kodo evolved, it moved further and further away from the folk music arrangement-driven activities of Ondekoza and towards a more varied program. The first commercial recording by the group, released in 1984, included a work by member Yamaguchi Motofumi titled “Hae” (“Southern Wind”); beyond the taiko and flutes that were previously used in Ondekoza and Kodo works, “Hae” also features string instruments like the *koto* and even steel drums.¹⁴⁷ Yamaguchi was one of a new generation of performers that joined the group at the beginning of its rebirth as “Kodo,” quickly rising to an important performing position.

Another member who joined this period and would have a long-lasting impact on the development of Kodo – not to mention *wadaiko* music as a whole – was New York-born Leonard Eto. Similar to Hayashi Eitetsu, Leonard Eto had musical experience before he joined Kodo. The son of a professional *koto* player living in New York, he grew up surrounded by a combination of Japanese and Western instruments, and began playing drums as a teenager (Eto 2011). When he was 21, he saw *wadaiko* for the first time; believing that the taiko could be “an

¹⁴⁷ The group had actually started experimenting with steel drums in a piece by Hayashi Eitetsu, “Sōrenge” (written before he left the group).

instrument that [he] could use to express [himself],” he decided to join Kodo, becoming a member in 1984 (Eto 2011). By the end of the 1980s, Eto was principal player and music director for the group, helping to mold it into an ensemble with “a sense of musical freedom that rivaled the strictness they had held since Ondekoza” (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 82). This freedom revealed itself in a number of compositions by Eto; among the most influential was “Irodori” (“Colors”). Composed in 1990, “Irodori” ushered in a new composition style that is still followed by group members today.

One trademark of “Irodori” and other pieces composed in the same manner by Eto – and others that followed – is its use of the *katsugi okedō-daiko*. Eto adapted the construction of the drum to make it lighter, deeper but with a smaller diameter (Figure 52). This arrangement allows for greater freedom in terms of both rhythm and movement, with the player being able to move around more than in “Shishi Odori”. It also led to the development of a performance practice in which the drummer quickly plays on both sides of the drum. According to Kodo materials, “this performance practice started when Saito Eiichi tried out a percussion instrument called the ‘change (chango)’ that is performed by the Korean percussion group Samul Nori, and was musically adopted when Mr. Leonard Eto brought it into the piece ‘Yu-Karak’ (1988)” (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 111).¹⁴⁸ This new style of *katsugi okedō-daiko* performance was brought together in “Irodori” with advancements being made in the use of *chappa* by member Kaneko Ryutaro. Kaneko began to experiment with different ways of creating sounds using the cymbals, creating a complex sonic palette that could be integrated in Kodo’s new works.

¹⁴⁸ The term “musically adopted” (*ongaku-teki ni toriireta*) used in the Kodo book most likely means that “Yu-Karak” was the first piece in the group’s repertoire that used the Korean *changgo*-influenced style of *katsugi okedō-daiko* performance.



Figure 52. Leonard Eto playing the *katsugi-okedō-daiko* in "Irodori"

Screenshot from a 1992 VHS. (Kodo 1992)

A drum & *chappa* introduction opens “Irodori,” with an ostinato with occasional accents played by the *katsugi-okedō-daiko* accompanied by occasional beats on larger *katsugi-okedō-daiko* and *hiradō-daiko* (seen in video clip “4-10-Irodori 1”).¹⁴⁹ This opening rhythmic section leads into a melody playing by two *fue* players in unison over a rhythmic ostinato on the *shime-daiko* and *katsugi okedō-daiko* (Figure 53; seen in video clip “4-11-Irodori 2”).¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Another addition to Kodo’s instrumentation that occurred during Eto’s time as artistic director, a *hiradō-daiko* is a *byō-uchi-daiko* almost as large in diameter as an *ō-daiko* but only a fraction as deep, placed with heads facing up so that the player can hit it with a large *bachi* shaped like a baseball bat. The resulting visual would capture audiences’ attention and become a staple of Kodo performance practice.

¹⁵⁰ “Irodori” performance clips taken from Kodo, *Kodo*, (Sony Music Entertainment Inc., 1992), VHS, AV 23736.



Figure 53. The *fue* melody in "Irodori"¹⁵¹

As this melody repeats, the drums gradually add accents and slight rhythmic variations to the ostinato before the first section of the piece ends with a combination of the flute melody and the opening drum introduction. This first section is followed by a series of solos, first on the *katsugi-okedō-daiko* and then by the *chappa* and *ō-daiko* players. After the final *ō-daiko* solo, all the drummers drop out; only the *shime-daiko* continues as the flute players return to simultaneously play individual improvised variations of the initial melody. As they play, a dancer comes on to the stage and begins to dance in a manner similar to *bon odori* (see Chapter 3.1), emphasizing various hand gestures. The opening flute melody is restated, complete with full drum ensemble accompaniment, as the dancer brings out a fan with a flourish. It repeats over and over while underneath the drums gradually add in some variations and the dancer moves

¹⁵¹ Each performer adds a certain degree of ornamentation that varies depending on performance and repeat of the melody. What is presented here is the base melody as it is first presented in the piece.

Note: the pitch intervals implied by Western staff notation do not exactly represent the *fue* melody. This transcription is an approximation, as best can be accomplished using this notation.

around the stage, accompanied by several more performers waving poles with paper streams on top, until the piece ends with a big unison note.

While the combination wind instrument melody/drum accompaniment in “Irodori” is standard in festival music, until the late 1980s there had been few pieces in Kodo’s repertoire that utilized it.¹⁵² Similarly, other pieces had featured dancing or had a melodic focus, but “Irodori” was the first time that the various elements of a Kodo concert were brought together in a single composition; it is even one of the few pieces in Kodo’s repertoire beyond “O-daiko” to feature a solo on the *ō-daiko*. The work was a crowd-pleaser from the beginning of its history; in addition to being the encore of Kodo concert of much of the 1990s, it was particularly popular as the closing piece at Kodo’s Earth Celebration music festival, held every summer since 1988. Perhaps in recognition of this popularity, the basic structure of “Irodori” – slung *katsugi okedō-daiko* serving as rhythmic foundation underneath a *fue* melody – has been used for many other pieces in Kodo’s repertoire.¹⁵³ The closing piece for a Kodo concert, if not “Irodori,” is typically an “Irodori”-esque piece. At the same time, the prominence given to the *katsugi okedō-daiko* as a vehicle for rhythmic melody and soloist has been embraced by other members as they have written new pieces, while also exploring the movement possibilities of the drum (the simple ability to move around the stage while playing, first made possible with the *katsugi okedō-daiko*

¹⁵² While there is a *fue* melody in “Yatai-bayashi,” the focus is on the drumming, so it cannot be thought of in the same way.

¹⁵³ Other examples – beyond works composed by Eto – include Yamaguchi Motofumi’s “Niji no Nagori” (“Rainbow Trances,” composed in 1999), and Ishizuka Mitsuru’s “Mata Ashita” (“Tomorrow,” composed in 2011).

and *chappa*, as well as the choreographic potential in moving between both sides of the drum in a manner modeled after the Korean *changgo*).¹⁵⁴

4.7 TRANSFORMING WADAIKO PERFORMANCE ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

In many regards, Kodo's performance style is a continuation of that developed in the 1970s as Ondekoza; concerts feature a mix of festival music arrangements and original pieces, with "Yatai-bayashi," "Monochrome," and "O-daiko" remaining a standard part of the repertoire. At the same time, however, there is as much an emphasis on original works as on arrangements of festival music, a slight shift from the arrangement focus of early Ondekoza concerts. Further, the group has continued to create more varied and more complex pieces closer in concept to "Monochrome;" complex time signatures, experiments in orchestration and composition techniques, and new methods of stage presentation had become increasingly common over the years.

Ondekoza's original goal of revitalizing traditions has been replaced by Kodo with a mission "to both preserve and re-interpret traditional Japanese performing arts."¹⁵⁵ This change in wording is subtle yet crucial. The preservation of traditional arts is a reflection of growing fears within Japan about the loss of rural traditions as more and more people move to the cities

¹⁵⁴ Video clip "4-12-Irodori 3" includes a sequence from the end of "Irodori" featuring an improvisational interplay between Leonard Eto on the *katsugi okedō-daiko* and Kaneko Ryutaro on the *chappa*, demonstrating some of the visual elements explored in "Irodori," including fast playing involving transitions between both sides of the *katsugi okedō-daiko*. Excerpt from the VHS Kodo, *Kodo*.

¹⁵⁵ http://www.kodo.or.jp/general/index_en.html (accessed January 18, 2013)

(see Thornbury 1993), but is also connected to the educational initiatives taken by the group; the Kodo Cultural Foundation was established in 1997 “to carry out non-profit activities focused on social education and the notion of giving back to the local community.”¹⁵⁶ More interesting, however, is the mission to “re-interpret” traditional arts. The group describes their activities as “exploring the limitless possibilities of the traditional Japanese drum, the taiko.”¹⁵⁷ Beyond the continuation of their standard *wadaiko* practices, the group had also engaged in a number of collaborative efforts. In 1984 the group collaborated with Ishii Maki in the creation of the ballet “Kaguyahime,” featuring an orchestra utilizing both Western and Japanese instruments. Additionally, the group often worked together with jazz pianist Yamashita Yōsuke in the 1980s (including a series of live concerts and CDs). Taking the collaborative process even further, Kodo invites musicians from around the world every year to its Earth Celebration music festival on Sado, playing together in a series of concerts during the festival weekend. Similarly, Kodo’s 2002 album “Mondo Head” featured a series of works composed alongside with artists from around the world, produced by former Grateful Dead rock drummer Mickey Hart.

In recent years, Kodo has been particularly influenced by collaborations with artists from Japanese classical theater (kabuki and Noh, largely). Following a series of engagements with the famous kabuki *onnagata* (actor specializing in female roles) Bando Tamasaburo V, in 2011 the group appointed Tamasaburo to be Kodo’s new artistic director.¹⁵⁸ Not only was this the first

¹⁵⁶ http://www.kodo.or.jp/foundation/index_en.html (accessed April 12, 2013)

¹⁵⁷ http://www.kodo.or.jp/general/index_en.html (accessed January 18, 2013)

¹⁵⁸ Bando is the name of the kabuki school with which he is affiliated, Tamasaburo is his *natori* (professional name), which he received in 1964, and V indicates that he is the fifth performer to be given this name.

time that an artistic director came from outside the organization, but it was reflective of a continued desire to explore new forms of expression. Past collaborations with Tamasaburo – including a small, male-only ensemble tour called Dadan and a bold program meshing music and dance called Amaterasu – revealed a more complex side to *wadaiko* performance that had previously been seen in Kodo’s concerts. Between these more experimental activities and the group’s “One Earth Tour” (the program for which includes many of the group’s standards), Kodo has helped to push *wadaiko* performance in new directions, not just musically but in a broader artistic sense (in terms of costume, lighting, and many other elements influence the staging of a production in a theater). In one example of how the group is experimenting with different manners of production, new ways of transitioning between pieces have been used, including the use of dancers dimly in the back of the stage to draw the audience’s attention while all the drums in the front of the stage are moved in complete darkness. The combination of lightning and placement on stage is something that began with “Monochrome” and continues to this day. In Dadan tours, meanwhile, the group plays pieces first premiered on recordings but not normally performed on the regular “One Earth Tour,” including “Biei” (“Ethereal Flow”), for drums, flutes, and bamboo xylophone.

“Re-interpretation,” then, is accomplished in a variety of fashions. It is in essence the exploration of how Japanese taiko might be used in a multitude of performance settings. Most often, it is a removal of the drums from their Japanese folk or theatrical performance origins and placed alongside instruments from around the world, seeking new forms of expression. Through

In print, he is typically referred to as “Tamasaburo” or “Tamasaburo V.” <http://www.tamasaburo.co.jp/> (Accessed April 14, 2013)

the activities of Ondekoza and subsequently Kodo, *wadaiko* was brought into a new world of performance.

As Kodo has toured around the world, they have continued to perform their diverse concerts for full houses. The group's touring schedule has them in Japan for half of the year and touring around the world for the other half. Continually searching for new performance venues, they have managed to build an audience for *wadaiko* performance in places that had never before seen the art form. Kodo's activities take them beyond just Japan and North America, with regular travel to Europe – expanding upon the presence they had as Ondekoza – and South America as well as Australia, and even in recent years Korea and China.¹⁵⁹ Meanwhile, Kodo has had a major influence inside Japan as well, as a number of *wadaiko* groups have been established that follow the Kodo model of communal living and presenting a repertoire featuring both regional drumming styles arranged for stage performance and original compositions. Some of these groups have even adopted the Kodo model of equally dividing their attention between domestic and overseas activities.¹⁶⁰

At the same time, the continued growth of Kodo – and the initial success of Ondekoza – would not have been possible if not for the various relationships that the group has developed

¹⁵⁹ The group's first tour to South Korea took place in 2000, after the relaxation of South Korea's laws restricting the importation of Japanese culture. "East Meets East: Kodo in Korea and China," *the Kodo beat*, summer 2000.

¹⁶⁰ Among the modern groups that bear an obvious Kodo influence are TAO, YAMATO, and Taiko Group SHIDARA. In some cases, these groups have taken the musical and theatrical inspirations of Kodo in different directions, but much of their repertoire is similar to that original performed by Kodo in terms of orchestration and compositional framework (for example, *chappa*-only pieces influenced by "Jang-gwara" or *shime-daiko*-only pieces influenced by "Monochrome").

while touring the world. Indeed, the group has been greatly impacted by not just audience reception but also by the emergence of *wadaiko* groups outside of Japan. In Kodo's 30th anniversary retrospective book, the group singles out the American *wadaiko* group San Jose Taiko as having an early impact on Ondekoza members upon their first encounter:

When we saw their [San Jose Taiko] performance for the first time, with their bright, carefree, and expressions overflowing with joy that was the complete opposite of us who were simply devoted to pursuing a straight line to our goals, it had a huge impact on the members; at the same time, we felt a deep sense of relief. (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 96)

This “relief” was most likely tied to the fact that Ondekoza members had previously taken a rather stoic approach to stage performance. With their exposure to San Jose Taiko's mode of performance, they started to believe that it was okay to show various emotions while playing. They experimented with the implementation of this approach into their performance style, and by the 1980s were able to find a way to mesh the serious nature of works like “Monochrome” and the *ō-daiko* solo with a more light-hearted approach to *wadaiko* performance. This was further advanced once Leonard Eto joined the group. Coming from America, he had a different approach to *wadaiko* performance; according to Kodo materials, his carefree and bright nature was initially resisted by Japanese audiences, who expected a more solemn performance, but warmly embraced by American audiences (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 81). Eventually, Kodo began to work pieces into their repertoire that not only allowed them to smile and enjoy themselves while playing – “Irodori” is one of the prime examples of this – but wholeheartedly embraced humor as part of the performance. Some performances of Kaneko Ryutaro's “Jang-gwara,” for example, feature *chappa* players trying to upstage each

other; at one point, performers pretend to play catch with an imaginary ball being tossed between them via their cymbals (see video clip “4-13-Kodo-Jang-Gwara).¹⁶¹

The continued development of Ondekoza and Kodo’s performance style was immediately impacted by not only the group’s international touring but also by the spread of *wadaiko* performance beyond Japan to the United States. Beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s, at the same time that Ondekoza was starting their activities, the spread of *wadaiko* to the United States would have a huge impact on the growth of the art form. Not only did it open up a new market and new audiences for *wadaiko* groups, but it also brought in a new group of performers with different experiences and sensibilities. As the art form grew in the United States, and intercultural relationships were built between American and Japanese groups, it continued to evolve, pushing it in new artistic directions.

¹⁶¹ Video from Kodo, *Live at Acropolis*.

5.0 WADAIKO IN THE UNITED STATES: NEW WORLD, NEW MUSIC

After leaving Sado Island in the early 1980s, Den Tagayasu moved to Nagasaki and created a new version of Ondekoza, while back on Sado the original members of the group moved ahead with their vision of a new group called Kodo. Both groups routinely embarked on concert tours around the world, with cities in the United States being a primary destination. In the early 1990s, the new incarnation of Ondekoza literally ran its way across the United States, embarking on a tour in which members travelled on foot from venue to venue, eventually running a total of nearly 15,000 kilometers.¹⁶²

The audience at Kodo and Ondekoza's performances are not just fans of *wadaiko*, having grown in number since Ondekoza first appeared in the United States in the mid-1970s, but are often performers of the art form as well. Indeed, Kodo and Ondekoza's tours have greatly relied upon a support network in the United States comprised of *wadaiko* groups in assorted cities that can provide food and lodging. The United States *wadaiko* community that has helped to support

¹⁶² This tour has been discussed in several books published by performers who were members of Ondekoza during this time. See Ryohei Inoue, *Ondekoza, Amerika Wo Hashiru* 鬼太鼓座、アメリカを走る [Ondekoza, Run Through America] (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 1996); Emi Yuuki, *Ondekoza Ga Hashiru - Boku No Seishun Amerika 15,000-Kiro* 鬼太鼓座(おんでござ)が走る—ぼくの青春アメリカ 1万5千キロ [Ondekoza's Run Across the U.S.A.- My Youthful Days, America in 15,000Km] (Tokyo: Popura-sha, 1995).

Kodo and Ondekoza first began to emerge in the late 1960s in California. From its beginnings in Japantowns – areas of cities with large Japanese-American populations – in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Jose, the genre gradually spread across the United States. However, *wadaiko* as it developed in the United States is slightly different than the art form as it had evolved in Japan. While its growth owed much to Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko (see Chapters 2 and 3), it also gained characteristics unique to the United States. Performers brought in different musical inspirations and sets of experiences that influenced not only performance practices and the creation of repertoire, but also the acquisition of instruments and fundamental approaches to *wadaiko* performance. Thus, by the time Kodo and Ondekoza were touring the United States in the 1980s, *wadaiko* performance had developed its own characteristics and perspectives that impacted the broader, intercultural development of the genre and its music.

5.1 TANAKA SEIICHI & THE SAN FRANCISCO TAIKO DOJO

Wadaiko first came to the United States in the late 1960s, but the person who brought it to this country originally had no intention of being a *wadaiko* performer. In 1967, a 24-year old Japanese immigrant named Tanaka Seiichi arrived in the United States with his wife, a third-generation Japanese-American (*sansei*) that he had met while in college in Tokyo.¹⁶³ Tanaka had come to the United States to teach martial arts, but to his disappointment he discovered that “people in the U.S. were not interested in martial arts as an art, but rather as a technique for street

¹⁶³ <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/clips/436/> (Accessed October 29, 2012)

fighting” (Yoon 2007, 11). As a result, he ended up working as a strawberry picker in Watsonville, a town south of San Jose.

Shortly after arriving in the United States, Tanaka and his wife attended the first San Francisco Cherry Blossom Festival. The festival was created to bring people to San Francisco’s Japantown area; an aggressive redevelopment plan had recently been completed, and organizers wanted in particular to show off the shopping center, pagoda, and plaza that now stood in the center of the district. However, festival organizers also had other purposes in mind for the event:

It was a chance for Japanese Americans to come together, celebrate and learn about their culture. At the same time it was a way to include non-Japanese people and enable them to learn about Japanese culture and spend money in Japantown.

(King 1997, 116)

The model for this festival was Nisei Week in Los Angeles’s Little Tokyo, which had begun in 1934 to promote cultural and commercial development.¹⁶⁴

When Tanaka attended the Cherry Blossom Festival, he expected an environment similar to the raucous festivals of his youth in Nagano prefecture. However, the festivities were little more than a parade featuring, in Tanaka’s words, pretty girls wearing “beautiful kimono, and walking nicely” (*Big Drum: Taiko in the United States* 2005). He was disappointed by the quiet atmosphere of the festivities, but at the same time he found himself motivated to create “the beat and rhythm of the festival drum with which he had been familiar in Japan” (Otsuka 1997, 25). The following year (1968), Tanaka and his friends put together a performance for the festival: he

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.niseiweek.org/about/history.php> (accessed February 17, 2013)

played a drum borrowed from a local Buddhist temple while his friends carried around a *mikoshi* (portable shrine – see Chapter 3.4.1).¹⁶⁵

That same year, Ishizuka Yutaka (later known as Mochizuki Saburo) and members of Sukeroku Taiko came to San Francisco while accompanying a singer on a tour of the western United States (as discussed in Chapter 3.5). After a performance, Tanaka and two other young men asked Ishizuka to teach them the Sukeroku performance style. Agreeing after some initial trepidation, Ishizuka and two other members remained in San Francisco for two weeks to give lessons to not only the three young men but also to a number of people who came to watch the open sessions held in the Japan Center in San Francisco's Japantown (Mogi 2010, 39). When it came time to return to Japan, the Sukeroku Taiko members were unable to ship the drums back with them, so they left the equipment with Tanaka. This gift gave him the foundation for a *wadaiko* ensemble: “an *ō-daiko* with a *naname* stand, 2 *chū-daiko*, and a basic set of *shime-daiko*” (Mogi 2010, 39).¹⁶⁶

Bolstered by this experience, Tanaka returned to Japan for three months in the following year (1969). He travelled to Nagano Prefecture, where he had grown up, and asked to receive instruction from Oguchi Daihachi. In his youth, Tanaka “had been enamored by Osuwa Daiko” (Otsuka 1998, 45). When he envisioned the types of sounds that could be heard at a festival, one of his memories was “a group playing various taiko drums” that was most likely Oguchi

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/clips/436/> (Accessed October 29, 2012)

¹⁶⁶ The term *chū-daiko* is one that is occasionally used to refer to *nagadō-daiko*, owing to the typical size of this type of drum: “chū” means middle, placing it in relation to the *ō-daiko* (“ō” meaning “large”) and the small *shime-daiko*.

See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the *naname* stand.

Daihachi's group (*Big Drum: Taiko in the United States* 2005). However, as a child he had not been allowed to join the group, for in the early days of Osuwa Daiko Oguchi limited it only to family members and a few immediate friends. However, when Tanaka returned in 1969 Oguchi changed his mind and decided to teach him, due in part to Tanaka's fervor for the art form (Oguchi 1987, 241; Tanaka 2002) After studying with Oguchi for a short time, Tanaka returned to the United States and again performed at the Cherry Blossom Festival (Figure 54).



Figure 54. Tanaka Seiichi at the 1969 San Francisco Cherry Blossom Festival.

Gift of San Francisco Taiko Dojo, Japanese American National Museum (2005.97.2)

Used With Permission.

Together with his friends, he formed the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai (*doukukai* means “club” – literally, “an association of like-minded people”), a sort of “recreational group for Japanese youth” (Otsuka 1997, 25). The use of the Japanese term “Doukukai” is reflective both of practices in San Francisco’s Japantown, where many older businesses and organizations used Japanese terms, and of the fact that the majority of early members were Japanese

immigrants with Japanese as their primary language. It was a gathering point for these immigrants, a way to establish a social circle. That is not to say that the group was restricted to Japanese immigrants, however, as from the beginning of the group's history its membership included Japanese-Americans and even people not of Japanese or Asian descent.

However, Tanaka soon moved beyond viewing *wadaiko* simply as a social activity, or something that could fill the sonic space of the San Francisco Cherry Blossom Festival, and decided to dedicate his life to the musical genre. He saw *wadaiko* as a way to contribute to the community, having observed how the crowds reacted when he played the drum.¹⁶⁷ At the same time, however, he saw in the art form a new path similar to his original goal of teaching martial arts in the United States, believing that “a focus on people and accessibility was something that taiko, more than other traditional Japanese art forms, could offer” (Yoon 2007, 11).

The San Francisco Taiko Doukoku's early repertoire included many pieces taken from the catalogues of Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko; works like “Suwa Ikazuchi,” “Hiryū Sandan Gaeshi,” and “Yodan Uchi” formed the core of performances. At the same time, however, Tanaka also began to compose new works for his group that combined the various performance styles he had learned. One such work was “Sokobayashi,” written in the early 1970s.

5.1.1 “Sokobayashi”

Named after “Sōkō,” the word for San Francisco used by first-generation Japanese immigrants to the United States (*issei*), “Sokobayashi” was dedicated to that generation that supported the

¹⁶⁷ <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/clips/436/> (Accessed October 29, 2012)

Japanese-American community.¹⁶⁸ The work was created in response to Tanaka’s own discovery of the history of Japanese immigrants in the United States. He wanted to give something back to that group that was so overjoyed by his performances at the San Francisco Cherry Blossom Festival and other community events, noting that he would watch them smile with tears streaming down their faces.¹⁶⁹

“Sokobayashi” is a reflection of Tanaka’s early *wadaiko* experience, a combination of elements taken from both Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko performance practices.¹⁷⁰ The primary ensemble is similar to the instrumentation used in the Sukeroku Taiko “Oroshi Daiko”-“Shiraume Daiko”-“Matsuri Daiko” suite: four *nagadō-daiko*, plus a *shime-daiko* and an *ō-daiko* (placed on the ground and played like a *nagadō-daiko*, however, rather than on a stand).¹⁷¹ The *nagadō-daiko* are placed on the slanted *naname* stands used by Sukeroku Taiko, further placing it within that Tokyo *Shitamachi* festival performance lineage (see Chapter 3.1). Meanwhile,

¹⁶⁸ The name “Soko” came from a transliteration of San Francisco using Chinese characters – Sō-hō-shi-ku-kō (桑方西斯哥) – which was later reduced to Sō-kō. The name can still be found in many Japanese-American businesses and institutions across San Francisco.

“Bayashi,” meanwhile, is the Japanese word for festival orchestras. The naming evokes regional festival music traditions in Japan, which often combine place names and “-bayashi” (for example, *Edo-bayashi* – see Chapter 3.4.1).

¹⁶⁹ <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/clips/351/> (accessed October 29, 2012)

¹⁷⁰ An audio recording of “Sokobayashi” has been uploaded by San Francisco Taiko Dojo to their official website. <http://www.sftaiko.com/files/music/sokobayashi.mp3> (accessed February 15, 2013)

¹⁷¹ While some performances of this piece feature a larger ensemble, both with more *nagadō-daiko* or other drums and percussion instruments, this instrumentation is at the core of the performance and serves as the common link for all variations.

Tanaka also added elements taken from Osuwa Daiko practices – most prominently, the *tettō* (a metallic, pipe-like instrument created by Oguchi Daihachi – see Chapter 2.3) and the *fue* (rarely used in Sukeroku Taiko repertoire, but found in some Osuwa Daiko pieces). Further, the use of the *ō-daiko* is closer to Osuwa Daiko practice than to Sukeroku Taiko, playing an ostinato with occasional accent that highlights the rhythmic melody (as compared to within Sukeroku Taiko, when the *ō-daiko* is used in a more ‘melodic’ role).

Tanaka also added some elements not found in the practices of his teachers. The drums, *tettō*, and *fue* are accompanied by poles with wooden rings attached called *shakujō*, used in Japan for processions during festivals and Buddhist rituals (Figure 55) (Malm 2000, 348). The sound of the rings hitting against the pole as the bearers walk helps to announce the coming of a festival procession.



Figure 55. Members of a festival procession holding *shakujō*

Sanno Matsuri, Tokyo, June 8, 2012

Photo by the author

The *o-daiko* and *tettō* provide a rhythmic framework via their ostinato, occasionally providing some accents.

Figure 57. The first rhythmic ostinato in "Sokobayashi"

Here, Tanaka makes an addition to the performance styles of his teachers. The *shakujō* players strike the pole on the floor in time, adding to the rhythmic foundation upon which everything else is overlaid. Meanwhile, the *fue* provides a semi-improvised melody as the rest of the ensemble plays, a practice not found in Sukeroku Taiko's repertoire and very rarely in the music of Osuwa Daiko. The bamboo flute has a secondary role, however, standing at the back of the ensemble; if not for the use of a microphone, the flute would not be able to be heard over the drums.¹⁷³

On top of this ostinato and *fue* quasi-improvisation, a rhythmic melody is played on the *nagadō-daiko* (Figure 58); this follows the practice of using ‘middle’ drums as melody within Oguchi Daihachi’s orchestration scheme (see Chapter 2.1.1). This melody is repeated twice, accompanied by an ostinato on the *ō-daiko*, *tettō*, and *shime-daiko*. It stands apart from the patterns created by Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko through a greater emphasis on off-beat

¹⁷³ The *fue* part uses a quasi-pentatonic scale using the notes D, E, G, A, and B flat. I call it semi-improvised due to the fact that in performance, certain intervals are accentuated over others, such as a descent from D to B flat and from G to B.

Owing both to the semi-improvised nature of the *fue* part and its secondary position in relation to the drums (which are the focus of this piece), I will not be including a transcription.

rhythmic patterns; while there were off-beat rhythms in Sukeroku Taiko and Osuwa Daiko pieces, the frequency of such rhythms in “Sokobayashi” and more common interplay between rim and drumhead notes causes the piece to stand out from its predecessors. At the same time, there is a great deal of choreography in a performance of the melody; much like in many Osuwa Daiko pieces (such as “Suwa Ikazuchi” and “Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi,” see Chapter 2.2 and 2.3), spaces in the rhythm are filled with various movements – most prominently, diagonal points and circular movements with the hands and arms (see video clip “5-2-SFTD-Sokobayashi 2”).



Figure 58. "Sokobayashi" rhythmic melody

After a second repeat of the melody, there is another pause, before the *tettō* reenters at a faster tempo. This begins a series of interplay between the *tettō* and *nagadō-daiko*, in a fashion similar to the *nagadō-daiko/shime-daiko* interplay of Sukeroku Taiko’s “Matsuri Daiko” (see Chapter 3.4.3.3). The *nagadō-daiko* plays a fast, quiet ostinato, adding accented rhythms that

interchange with the *tettō* rhythm (Figure 59).¹⁷⁴ This then leads into a series of improvisations by each player as the rest of the ensemble provides the ostinato. Tanaka is typically the last player to improvise, with the solos starting fast and loud and gradually getting softer and sparser.

The figure displays four systems of musical notation for the interplay between *Tettō* and *Nagadō-daiko*. Each system consists of two staves: the top staff is for *Tettō* and the bottom staff is for *Nagadō-daiko*. The notation uses standard musical symbols including eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

- System 1:** *Tettō* plays a continuous eighth-note pattern. *Nagadō-daiko* plays a continuous eighth-note pattern. Dynamics: *f* for *Tettō*, *pp* for *Nagadō-daiko*. The system ends with a final note in *Tettō* marked with an accent (>) and *Nagadō-daiko* marked with *f pp*.
- System 2:** *Tettō* plays eighth notes, then rests. *Nagadō-daiko* plays eighth notes, then rests. Dynamics: *f pp*, *f*, *pp*, and *mp* are marked under the *Nagadō-daiko* staff.
- System 3:** *Tettō* plays eighth notes, then rests. *Nagadō-daiko* plays eighth notes, then rests. Dynamics: *f* and *pp* are marked under the *Nagadō-daiko* staff.
- System 4:** *Tettō* plays eighth notes, then rests. *Nagadō-daiko* plays eighth notes, then rests. Dynamics: *mf* is marked under the *Tettō* staff, and *mf* is marked under the *Nagadō-daiko* staff.

Figure 59. "Sokobayashi" interplay between the *tettō* and *nagadō-daiko*

¹⁷⁴ When playing this part, Tanaka typically uses the various parts of the *tettō* to create different-pitched sounds – high, medium, and low. However, the choice of pitch is improvised; thus, the transcription features only one pitch.

Eventually, Tanaka ends his improvisation, pausing momentarily before reentering once again with the fast ostinato from the beginning of the section. “Sokobayashi” then concludes with a restatement of the melody (accompanied by the *fue*, who is generally silent during the drum solos), performed at the same tempo as the solos. The increased speed gives this melody a greater degree of intensity, echoed in the *ō-daiko* ostinato played at this new tempo. After the final note, all players move back into a pose position combining both Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko styles – the *tettō* and *shime-daiko* players point their arms in the air, much as Oguchi Daihachi does in many Osuwa Daiko pieces, while the *nagadō-daiko* players bring their arms back into a pose used often by Sukeroku Taiko (Figure 60).



Figure 60. The final pose of "Sokobayashi"

Screenshot from a 2008 DVD (San Francisco Taiko Dojo 2008).

While “Sokobayashi” draws heavily from the performance styles learned by Tanaka in the late 1960s, there is also a degree of intensity in a performance of the piece that cannot be found in Osuwa Daiko or Sukeroku Taiko repertoire. This can partially be attributed to the

number of drummers featured in performances, as Tanaka fully adopted Oguchi Daihachi's approach of having many drummers playing at the same time, but it is also due to a more forceful and physical performance style developed by Tanaka as he added in elements from his martial arts background. Players yell loudly and often in support of those that are improvising, a far cry from the spare, rhythmic vocalizations utilized by Sukeroku Taiko. Further, players often jump and move around as they play, putting their entire bodies into hitting the drum. While Sukeroku Taiko and Osuwa Daiko both integrated movement into their performance style, this is something different, more an expression of emotion and the physicality of playing the drum than a preconceived choreographic action. This development of new performance practices would be continued by Tanaka throughout the 1970s.

As the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai became more popular and attracted more members, they began to expand activities beyond San Francisco, performing at cultural festivals across California. In the late 1970s, Tanaka changed the group's name to San Francisco Taiko Dojo (the name by which it is known today).¹⁷⁵ This change reflected both the changing nature of the group – it was less a group of young Japanese friends and more an environment in which members were taught the basics of the burgeoning musical genre of *wadaiko* – and Tanaka's

¹⁷⁵ It is unclear when exactly the name change occurred. Otsuka Chie cites a date of 1980 in her history of the group. Chie Otsuka, "Learning Taiko in America" (Master's Thesis, University of Tsukuba 1997), 26.

However, the name "San Francisco Taiko Dojo" is used in a 1977 documentary about the group by David Kimura, included in a 2005 DVD published by the Japanese-American National Museum in connection with its "Big Drum: Taiko in the United States" exhibition. *Big Drum: Taiko in the United States*, (Japanese American National Museum, 2005), DVD.

Given that Otsuka reports that the group was called the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai at the beginning of its activities, it can be assumed that the change happened sometime in the mid- or late-1970s.

own approach to the art form. The term “dōjō” literally means “place of the way,” and is used in Japanese to refer to a physical training facility. Reflective of this approach, Tanaka began to require a more strict approach to practices, adopting a hierarchical relationship system commonly found in Japanese martial and performance arts. At the same time, even as the group membership expanded beyond the Japanese immigrants that made up the first generation of members, Tanaka continued to maintain a connection with Japan. As reported by Otsuka Chie, “students also learn several Japanese songs, Japanese writing, and Japanese terms along with learning songs and etiquette” (Otsuka 1997, 28). Students and group members are required to open and close each practice with *aisatsu*, formalized greetings and words of parting meant partially as terms of respect for the teacher and for your fellow students (commonly used in not only Japanese arts, but in many elements of Japanese society).

Meanwhile, practices grew more and more intense as Tanaka integrated his martial arts experiences into *wadaiko*. Many former members speak of being kicked or hit with a drumstick if they made a mistake, as well as describe long periods of running or playing rolls on the drum that were more tests of endurance rather than exercises meant to develop musical technique. It caused many to leave the group, but those that remained talk about the experience with a degree of pride, viewing it as a rite of passage of sorts.

Tanaka came to draw more and more from his martial arts background in the development of performance practices for his group, as he came to believe that *wadaiko* “demands not only musical skill, but also the acquisition of respect, the training of one’s body, and the preparation of one’s mind,” a concept that echoes tenets found in many martial arts (Otsuka 1998, 47). In time, he would define his performance style as “a powerful, sophisticated synthesis of rhythm, harmony, and body movement,” the result of “rigorous mental, physical,

and martial arts training.”¹⁷⁶ In the United States, this came to be known as the “Tanaka style” of *wadaiko*, a performance style separate from that developed by Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko.

Tanaka’s performance style combining martial arts and *wadaiko* is something unique to the development of *wadaiko* in the United States, an amalgamation that did not occur in Japan. In time, he began to apply the philosophy to new works being created for the group. Perhaps nowhere is this martial approach to *wadaiko* performance more apparent than in what has become San Francisco Taiko Dojo’s signature piece: “Tsunami.”

5.1.2 “Tsunami”

Composed by Tanaka in 1986, “Tsunami” is described in program notes as “a triumph, a tidal wave of human spirit” (“Program Notes for ‘Taiko Jam ‘11’ 2011”). This “tidal wave” reveals itself in many ways during the piece, but “Tsunami” is also an expression of the physicality of *wadaiko* performance. According to San Francisco Taiko Dojo materials, “physical strength and stamina are critical” to the Tanaka style of *wadaiko* performance; students “are put through a disciplined and physical regiment.”¹⁷⁷ Of course, this emphasis on the physicality of *wadaiko* is not unique to Tanaka. As discussed in Chapter 4, a core factor in the development of Ondekoza’s style was Den Tagayasu’s belief that a *wadaiko* concert was akin to a marathon; “O-daiko” was one such expression of this tenet. This has parallels in “Tsunami.” The piece features the *ō-daiko*, a trend in *wadaiko* performance and composition that began after Hayashi Eitetsu’s

¹⁷⁶ http://www.sftaiko.com/about_taiko.html (accessed December 31, 2012)

¹⁷⁷ http://www.sftaiko.com/about_sftd.html (accessed February 15, 2013)

extended improvisations became popular in the late 1970s as Ondekoza toured around the world (see Chapter 4.3). Before this time, the *ō-daiko* was used as a part of the larger ensemble; certainly this was the case in Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko repertoire, and even how it was used in “Sokobayashi.” Rarely did you see a drum much larger than a *nagadō-daiko*, and certainly not the size of the one featured in Ondekoza performances.

However, Hayashi’s innovations in *ō-daiko* performance practice had a huge impact on the *wadaiko* world. By the late 1970s, groups began to acquire their own very large *ō-daiko*, using Hayashi’s new hitting style in new works that featured extended improvisations on the drum. Even Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, the offshoot of Sukeroku Taiko founded by Kobayashi Seido in the early 1980s, created their own *ō-daiko* feature entitled “Edo no Kaze” (“Edo Wind”).¹⁷⁸

Looked at this from this perspective, “Tsunami” is a response to emerging trends within the *wadaiko* world. As Tanaka created his own performance style, he was bringing in a variety of elements to create a new hybrid between the various trends present at the time (mainly, Hayashi’s *ō-daiko* technique and the large ensemble approach favored by Oguchi Daihachi). At the same time, however, “Tsunami” is in some ways a unique entity – the manner in which the work is performed causes it to stand apart from other *ō-daiko*-focused pieces that emerged in the

¹⁷⁸ There are actually several rhythmic and compositional similarities between “Edo no Kaze” and “Tsunami.” “Edo no Kaze” does precede “Tsunami” by several years, having been composed in the early 1980s. Kenny Endo – who helped compose “Edo no Kaze” as a member of Oedo Sukeroku Taiko – suggests that it is more a matter of common lineage, members of both groups having seen Hayashi’s Ondekoza *ō-daiko* improvisations.

At the same time, Endo has said that another Sukeroku Taiko founding member, Tosha Kiyonari, claims to have played a part in the development of “Tsunami,” but the veracity of these claims is unclear.

1980s, and reflects the increasingly physical and martial nature of the San Francisco Taiko Dojo performance style.

“Tsunami” is divided into two parts. The first part is characterized by interplay between two groups of performers; each group includes several *nagadō-daiko*, as well as a player on each side of an *ō-daiko* placed at the center of the stage. The *ō-daiko* is turned so that the drummers are standing perpendicular to the audience (similar to how “O-daiko” was played at the beginning of its history, before Ondekoza turned the drum so the soloist’s back faced the audience), allowing the audience to see the full range of motion of the player while also associating them spatially with each *nagadō-daiko* group. The ‘wave’ invoked in the promotional materials for “Tsunami” first emerges in this opening part; following a series of rolls, an accented rhythm is repeated several times, rising from quiet to loud before returning to quiet in the next repeat (Figure 61, seen in video clip “5-3-SFTD-Tsunami 1”).¹⁷⁹ During the rest at the end of the first bar of this sequence, the players circle their arms up and back, emphasizing the circular nature of the progression.

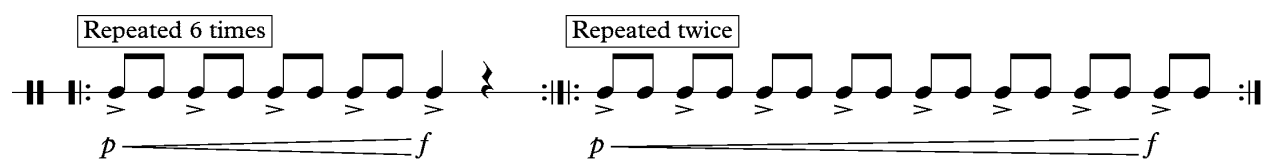


Figure 61. The rising rhythmic pattern in "Tsunami"

After several repeats of this phrase, a rhythmic melody begins (Figure 62, seen in video clip “5-4-STFD-Tsunami 2”). The first two measures of the melody are played by all members of

¹⁷⁹ Video clip from San Francisco Taiko Dojo, *40th International Taiko Festival*, (San Francisco Taiko Dojo, 2009), DVD.

the ensemble, before the ensemble splits into sub-groups. One sub-group (group A in the transcription) plays the rest of the melody, while the rest of the ensemble continue the pattern in the first two measures of the melody, growing from quiet to loud before dropping down and beginning again. The “wave” within “Tsunami” is not only represented by the gradually increasing tempo of the melody and dynamic contrasts found within (for example, in the first two measures of the transcription above), but is also reflected in this underlying ostinato. After the first repeat, the groups switch roles – group B plays the melody after the third measure, while group A continues the ostinato. During the third repeat, both groups play the melody.

3x, tempo increasing with each repeat

Played by both groups

1st time, group A; 2nd time, group B; 3rd time, all

The musical notation is presented on four staves. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and a tempo instruction '3x, tempo increasing with each repeat'. It shows a melody starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic, marked with a crescendo line, and increasing to a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff continues the melody, also marked with a crescendo line from *p* to *f*. The third staff shows a melody starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic and increasing to a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth staff continues the melody, marked with a crescendo line from *p* to *f*. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Figure 62. The rhythmic melody of "Tsunami"

Finally, after the third and final repeat, there is a slight pause (akin to the division between melody and improvisation in “Sokobayashi”). Tanaka plays a short rhythm on the *tettō* before all members of the ensemble play two measures of ostinato. This transition section sets up

the second and longest part of “Tsunami”: a series of extended improvisations on the *ō-daiko*. “Tsunami” is balanced unevenly on the side of the *ō-daiko* solo section, which is typically two to three times the length of the first part.¹⁸⁰ Player after player improvises on the large drum as the rest of the ensemble – aside from a small group on the *tettō* and *shime-daiko*, who provides the rhythmic ostinato – kneels and yells in support of the soloist (Figure 63).¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ To give an example, the performance of “Tsunami” at the 40th International Taiko Festival in 2008, released on DVD in 2009, was 25 minutes in length. The first part lasted 7 minutes, the second 18 minutes.

¹⁸¹ Several videos of this part of “Tsunami” have been posted by San Francisco Taiko Dojo to their YouTube account.

A note about the image in Figure 63: It features one member of San Francisco Taiko Dojo in a loincloth, similar to how “O-daiko” is performed by Ondekoza and Kodo. However, it is unclear the degree to which this is standard practice. While it does seem to occur on certain occasions, such as the International Taiko Festival and the 2011 Taiko Jam concert, there are many other documented cases in which performers simply wear their regular performance garb.

See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcAecTJs8q0> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pTPBv215X0> (accessed February 15, 2013).



Figure 63. San Francisco Taiko Dojo performing "Tsunami"

From the San Francisco Taiko Dojo press kit

<http://www.sftaiko.com/photos.html> (accessed December 31, 2012)

The transition between each soloist is cued by a set rhythmic phrase, played first by the soloist and soon joined by the rest of the drummers (Figure 64). The next soloist then begins, and the cycle continues until the final soloist is complete, at which time the work either proceeds into a short coda or simply ends.

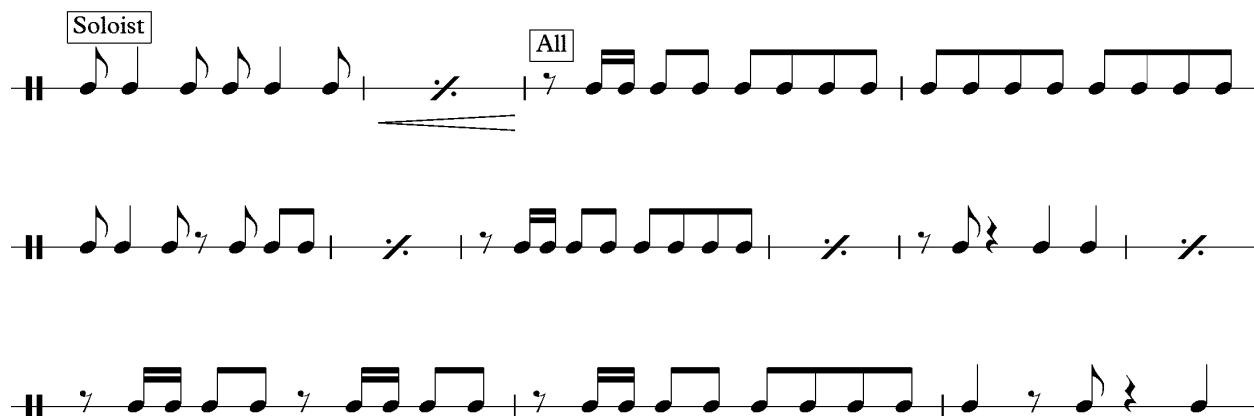


Figure 64. Transition between solos in "Tsunami"

Tanaka's martial approach to *wadaiko* performance is not only revealed through the extended *ō-daiko* improvisations in "Tsunami," but also in the extra-musical elements found during a performance of the piece. The intensity of a "Tsunami" performance is not only present in the musical contour or in the extended *ō-daiko* solos, but can be seen on the faces of the ensemble members. Those players not improvising on the *ō-daiko* are encouraged to yell in support of the soloist; this is not a stylized shout in the fashion of the *hōgaku kakegoe* used by Sukeroku Taiko (see Chapter 3.4.2), but emotional yells as loud as one can manage.¹⁸² Not only is this a far cry from the approach of Sukeroku Taiko, but is separate from how Ondekoza and Kodo present "O-daiko." There is occasional *kakegoe* or *kiai* (spirited shouts – see Chapter 2.3) in a Kodo performance, but nothing reaching the intensity of a performance of "Tsunami."

Meanwhile, there are other elements that separate not only "Tsunami" but San Francisco Taiko Dojo performances in general from its predecessors in Japan. From early on the group's career, it featured among its members a number of women. This was a far cry from *wadaiko* in Japan, which was for a long time a male-dominated art form. Groups like Ondekoza and Osuwa Daiko did have female members, but they were in the minority; indeed, with Ondekoza and Kodo, it was not until the 1980s that female members were featured on drums – they were either singers or dancers. This was related partially to conceptions of purity within Japanese religions, with women believed to be unclean because of menstruation. Because of the use of taiko in religious ritual, they were considered to be sacred, and thus could not be played by women (Bender 2012, 156). In the United States, however, there was no such taboo, perhaps because the lack of presence of Shinto (the main transmitter of Japanese purity beliefs). From an early

¹⁸² Cries of "yeah" and "woo" are commonly heard, in addition to Japanese language-derived shouts like "so re" and "sorya."

period, Tanaka allowed women to become members of his group, a decision that would have a large impact on the development of *wadaiko* in the United States. Presently, it is believed that as much as three-fourths of participants in *wadaiko* activities in the United States are female.¹⁸³ By allowing women to perform both within his ensemble and, in time, as soloists during “Tsunami,” Tanaka was opening the possibilities for the negotiation of gender roles within *wadaiko* performance.¹⁸⁴

“Tsunami,” then, represents Tanaka’s movement away from the influence of Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko towards a more individual performance style. His integration of martial arts into *wadaiko* performance and the intensity with which he approached the art form

¹⁸³ Deborah Wong, in her writings, simply says “a significant number.” Deborah Wong, “Taiko and the Asian/American Body: Drums, Rising Sun, and the Question of Gender,” in *Ethnomusicology: A Contemporary Reader* Jennifer C. Post (New York: Routledge, 2006), 92.

However, based on my observations during my fieldwork, including participation in the North American Taiko Conference in 2009 and 2011, and the East Coast Taiko Conference in 2012 and 2013, I would say that the number is in between 2/3 and 3/4.

¹⁸⁴ This is an admittedly simplistic approach to this topic, as the relationship between *wadaiko* and gender is a complicated subject that has been explored by many other authors. See, for example, *ibid*; Paul J. Yoon, “Asian Masculinities and Parodic Possibility in Odaiko Solos and Filmic Representations,” *Asian Music* 40, no. 1 (2009).

At the same time, there has been much written on the masculinist images propagated by the *ō-daiko* solo. See Shawn Bender, “Of Roots and Race: Discourses of Body and Place in Japanese Taiko Drumming,” *Social Science Japan Journal* 8, no. 2 (2005); “Drumming from Screen to Stage: Ondekoza’s Odaiko and the Reimaging of Japanese Taiko.” and Yoon, “Asian Masculinities and Parodic Possibility in Odaiko Solos and Filmic Representations.”

As a whole, these topics are outside of the scope of this study, as they have not directly impacted the creation of repertoire, but they are worth noting.

separated him from what had come before in Japan, and would have a tremendous impact on the development of the art form in the United States. Beginning in the 1970s, Tanaka would teach others the basics of *wadaiko* performance – as well as his particular performance style – and the art form began to make its way across the nation.

At the same time, however, in other ways Tanaka has firmly held on to the performance lineages of which he is a part.¹⁸⁵ He actively embraces many of the discourses used by Oguchi Daihachi concerning the connection of *wadaiko* performance to past traditions (see Chapter 2). A description of taiko – as *wadaiko* is more typically known in the United States – on the San Francisco Taiko Dojo website states that “the history of Taiko is interwoven in the fabric of Japanese history.”¹⁸⁶ Even as it is noted that the “spiritual aspect of Taiko has faded with the modernization of Japan,” the renaissance that came with the introduction of *wadaiko* in the 1950s and 1960s is described as “a rediscovery of native arts.” This “rediscovery” is very similar to Oguchi Daihachi’s discourse of revival, suggesting an immediate connection between *wadaiko* and past performance traditions (see Chapter 2.4). That is not to say that there is no recognition of post-World War II innovations, but even then it is presented from a very particular angle. The San Francisco Taiko Dojo page about Taiko claims: “in the last decade, Taiko enthusiasts, Seiichi Tanaka, and the San Francisco Taiko Dojo have redeveloped Taiko from its primitive folk art roots to a powerful, sophisticated synthesis of rhythm, harmony, and body movement.”¹⁸⁷ Beyond placing Tanaka as a primary player in this process – perhaps natural (if

¹⁸⁵ A page on the San Francisco Taiko Dojo website lists the performance styles and teacher with whom Tanaka has studied. http://www.sftaiko.com/about_tanaka.html (accessed February 15, 2013)

¹⁸⁶ http://www.sftaiko.com/about_taiko.html (accessed February 15, 2013)

¹⁸⁷ http://www.sftaiko.com/about_taiko.html (accessed February 15, 2013)

not necessarily correct) due to this statement's presence on the San Francisco Taiko Dojo website – this statement not only positions the development within a certain (incorrect) time frame, but creates a primitive/modern dichotomy that denies the close links *wadaiko* performance has with festival music.

Even as he was creating new performance practices, then, Tanaka was in many ways adhering to the philosophical statements made by his teachers. At the same time, however, he has also occasionally taken a slightly different approach than Oguchi, owing to differences in the situation in the United States. Tanaka has at times situated San Francisco Taiko Dojo as performers of 'proper' *wadaiko* due to his connection with groups in Japan, a position that would place him at odds with others *wadaiko* groups that would emerge in the late 1960s and early 1970s, particularly a group from Los Angeles that called themselves Kinnara Taiko.

5.2 KINNARA TAIKO & 'BUDDHIST TAIKO'

In 1969, a group called 'Kinnara' – which means "supernatural being of music" – was established at the Senshin Buddhist Temple by Reverend Mas Kodani "with the intention of involving temple members in activities such as chanting which, at the time, was uncommon for Japanese Americans in the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist sect" (of which Senshin Buddhist Temple is a part) (Yoon 2007, 14). According to Reverend Kodani, it started as a chanting group, but there

was also a visiting artist at UCLA teaching *gagaku* (Japanese court music) who was invited to teach members of the group.¹⁸⁸

At the same time, following a *bon odori* celebration at the Temple, some of the drummers who had played *bon daiko* continued to play after the dancers left.¹⁸⁹ They enjoyed it so much that they decided to start a drumming group in addition to the chanting group and *gagaku* ensemble that were being founded. This drumming group was named Kinnara Taiko. However, it took a completely different approach to *wadaiko* performance than Tanaka Seiichi's group in San Francisco.

Indeed, this different approach to *wadaiko* began before they ever wrote any pieces to perform. Upon learning the prices of drums imported from Japan, Kinnara members decided to build the drums themselves. Buying tacks, rawhide skins, and empty barrels from a hardware store that were previously used to hold nails, they stretched the heads over the barrels with pliers and quickly tacked the heads to the body, creating their own *nagadō-daiko*. Kinnara members gradually refined the process, incorporating car jacks and various other pieces of equipment into the process in order to create a drum for a fraction of the price it would have cost to import drums from Japan. This was a significant development, a process never before conceived of by groups in Japan, where there was a long history of drum manufacture. Meanwhile, Kinnara members created *shime-daiko* by using bolts to tighten the heads rather than rope, a practice that was eventually copied by manufacturers in Japan. In this way, Kinnara Taiko was able to begin activities with no connection to *wadaiko* groups in Japan.

¹⁸⁸ As described in a sermon given in December 2009 during a service for Kinnara's 40th Anniversary, and later posted on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVgV3QdUAzk> (accessed February 14, 2013).

¹⁸⁹ See Chapter 3.1 for a discussion of *bon odori* and *bon daiko*.

Once the group gathered and created enough drums on which they could play, they then turned their attention towards writing pieces. They based their performance style off of videos and pictures they saw, as well as audio recordings from Japan.¹⁹⁰ At the same time, they were influenced by not only the music they were listening to, but also the Buddhist ideals espoused within the Kinnara performance group.

5.2.1 “Ashura”

One of the first pieces composed for Kinnara Taiko was “Ashura.” Written in 1970 by Reverend Mas Kodani, it is a prime example of the manner in which Kinnara Taiko used *wadaiko* performance as a way to pursue Buddhist ideals. The concept behind the work has been laid out in several different promotional materials used by Kinnara Taiko and other *wadaiko* groups in the United States that now perform the work:

Ashura is the 5th of the 6 realms of Samsara, the unawakened existence. It is the realm of suffering produced by envy and jealousy. We become “fighting demons” or Ashura when we feel the need to win at all costs, or seek thrill in conflict, violence, and war. If you listen closely, you can hear the two sides fighting against each other on the drums, but in the end, the conflict is resolved and they all end as one.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ As discussed by Johnny Mori in an interview for the Japanese-American National Museum’s Watase Media Arts Center. <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/clips/727/> (accessed February 14, 2013)

¹⁹¹ <http://www.kazedaiko.com/Kaze%20Song%20Descriptions.pdf> (accessed February 14, 2013)

“Ashura” features numerous *nagadō-daiko* (on various types of stands) divided into two groups, accompanied by *atarigane* and *horagai* (conch shell trumpet; see Chapter 2.2). A series of rhythmic patterns are played over an underlying rhythmic ostinato played on the *nagadō-daiko* by different sub-groups of the ensemble at various times within the piece (Figure 65)

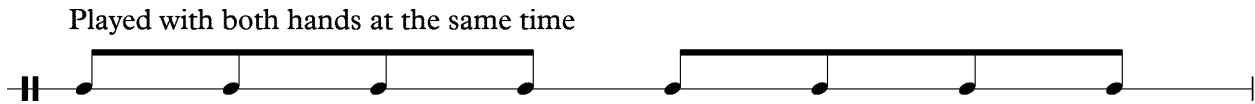


Figure 65. The underlying rhythmic ostinato in "Ashura"

The first series of rhythms, which could be called the A melody, is played by one group of *nagadō-daiko* players and then the other (hence the division of the drums into two groups), with one measure of rhythmic ostinato between each repeat (Figure 66, and seen in video clip “5-5-Kinnara 1”).¹⁹² The *atarigane* mimics the melody played on the drums, with occasional variation when rhythms become more difficult to play with one drumstick on the handheld gong. Meanwhile, the transition between groups is signaled by the *horagai*, a practice that hearkens back to the use of the conch shell in Buddhist rituals, meant to signal “the movement of one’s entering into the path of the Dharma (the voice of the Buddha-Dharma)” (Takemoto 1997).

¹⁹² Video taken from bonus materials on the Japanese-American National Museum’s 2005 DVD. *Big Drum: Taiko in the United States*.



Figure 66. Rhythmic melody A of "Ashura"

The repeated rhythms and phrases found in melody A are a primary characteristic of “Ashura.” Of course, this is not unique to Kinnara Taiko; as described in Chapter 2, many of Osuwa Daiko’s pieces feature repeated rhythms and phrases. Further, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 it is a trait commonly found in Japanese folk music. At the same time, however, as a compositional technique found often in Kinnara Taiko’s pieces it may have a degree of extra-musical purpose as well. Another work, “Samsara” (written by founding member Johnny Mori), features a limited number of rhythms repeated many times. In this work, the repetition is meant to stand for the Buddhist concept of samsara, the cycle of rebirth that continues until enlightenment is reached. While samsara is not the main focus of “Ashura,” it might have influenced the many uses of repeated patterns in Kinnara Taiko works.

After each group plays rhythmic melody A, with a measure of ostinato in between each, the second group presents the second rhythmic melody (B, seen in Figure 67 and in video clip “5-6-Kinnara 2”). After a measure of ostinato and the sounding of the *horagai*, the B melody is then played by the first group. This presentation of the melodies by one group and then another, never played in unison by the entire group, is one way in which the conflict narrative of “Ashura” is evoked.



Figure 67. Rhythmic melody B in "Ashura"

Following the presentation of the first two rhythmic melodies by both groups, the conflict within “Ashura” reveals itself fully. The first group of players plays the A melody, while the second group of performers the B melody. Following this, the second group plays the B melody while the first group introduces a new melody (C, seen in Figure 68). While continuing the conflicting nature of the latter half of “Ashura,” this C melody also hints at the resolution that is to come by the end, which some of the rhythms fitting into the patterns in melody A. In particular, the hits on the rim in the final measures of the melody alternate with similar hits on the rim in the final line of melody B, creating an interlocking matter with rim sounds interchanging between the two groups (as seen in video clip “5-7-Kinnara 3”).



Figure 68. Rhythmic melody C of "Ashura"

The resolution to conflict discussed in promotional materials for “Ashura” finally comes in the final four measures of the piece (Figure 69), as both groups play the same rhythm for the first time as the *horagai* are blown.

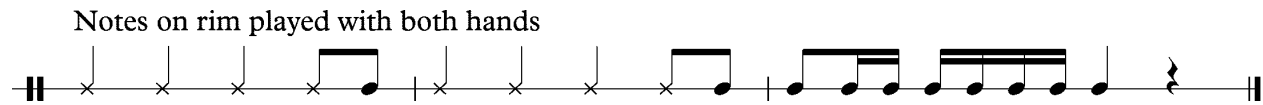


Figure 69. Ending series of "Ashura"

With works like “Ashura” and the aforementioned “Samsara,” Kinnara Taiko blends *wadaiko* performance and Buddhist doctrine, moving beyond simple musical performance. Indeed, Rev. Kodani describes participation in Kinnara Taiko as an expression of Buddhist ideals; the purpose of performance is “to encounter one’s arrogance, pride or desire to impress, and the group is a forum in which one figures out how to cope with those emotions” (Yoon 2007, 15).

This degree of a relationship between *wadaiko* performance and Buddhism is something that is unique to the United States. While there had been connections between *wadaiko* groups and Buddhist contexts prior to this time – most prominently, the influence of *bon daiko* on the development of Sukeroku Taiko’s performance style (see Chapter 3.1) – more influential was the art form’s connection with Shinto rite. The connections made by Oguchi Daihachi between the music of Osuwa Daiko and older performance practices were tied to the Suwa Grand Shrine, one of the oldest Shinto Shrines in the existence. Sukeroku Taiko, meanwhile, commonly drew from connections members had with the Yushima Tenjin shrine, a Shinto shrine originally established in 458 CE “in order to worship Ameno-tajikaraono-mikoto, one of the deities [that] appears in

the Japanese myths.”¹⁹³ The festival drumming arranged by Ondekoza and Kodo for the stage, meanwhile, was associated with Shinto festivals. Kinnara’s Buddhist roots, then, were something new.

The relationship between Buddhism and *wadaiko* in the United States has been influenced to a large degree by the role of Buddhist temples in the United States. Buddhist temples were (and continue to be) a central part of Japanese-American communities; in Los Angeles, in addition to the Senshin Buddhist Temple (established in 1951) there is also the Zenshuji Soto mission in Little Tokyo (Los Angeles’s Japantown, founded in 1922).¹⁹⁴ As a center of community activities, it was perhaps natural for *wadaiko* performance to arise at Buddhist temples rather than in a more secular setting, particularly given the ties that would emerge between *wadaiko* and the Japanese-American community (discussed in the following section). Further, these temples often had drums for use during Obon and other events (Tanaka Seiichi first borrowed a drum from a Buddhist temple in San Francisco).

With an approach to *wadaiko* performance based more on Buddhist doctrine also came a perspective towards group activities amongst Kinnara Taiko members that was different from what was being espoused by Tanaka Seiichi in San Francisco. As stated by Reverend Kodani, “taiko playing is just another aspect of temple life on par with any of the other activities at the temple” (Yoon 2007, 14). Indeed, members call the group “a family and support network first, and a performing taiko troupe second” (Yoon 2007, 15). Kinnara Taiko rehearsals are loose and open, with members coming in and out of the rehearsal as their schedule dictates. In the early

¹⁹³ <http://www.yushimatenjin.or.jp/pc/eng-page/english.htm> (accessed February 14, 2013)

¹⁹⁴ <http://www.senshintemple.org/Senshin.html> (accessed February 14, 2013)

<http://www.zenshuji.org/history.html> (accessed February 14, 2013)

part of the Kinnara's history, the group has a very limited performance schedule. In recent years it has expanded its activities to include community festivals and local event, but in the late-1960s and 1970s Kinnara Taiko limited its activities primarily to performances at local Obon festivities (Endo 2011).

5.2.2 Tanaka Seiichi vs. Kinnara Taiko

Kinnara Taiko's loose approach to *wadaiko* performance caused members to find themselves at odds with Tanaka Seiichi in the early days of the group's existence. Tanaka took issue with the Los Angeles-based group's laid-back approach to *wadaiko*. Between the loose nature of practices and the music they played that was influenced as much by the music they listened to – funk, R&B, rock, and other popular music of the time – as by music of Buddhist rite, the approach taken by Kinnara Taiko members was completely different from that taken by the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai. Tanaka asked the group to:

...not call themselves a 'taiko' group because, in his opinion, what Kinnara was doing had nothing to do with Japanese taiko. He believed they were just a group of Japanese Americans hitting drums, with no context or connection to Japanese traditions. (Yoon 2007, 17)

Tanaka believed, in essence, that what he was performing was true *wadaiko*, thanks to his connection to groups in Japan like Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko. However, Kinnara Taiko members did not feel that they had no connection to drumming traditions. Rather, they were linking themselves to a different (and perhaps older) performance tradition: “the tradition of singing, dancing, and poetry recitation that went on during *horaku*, the celebrations that follow

major temple services” (Yoon 2007, 17). Susan Asai describes the practice in her 1985 study of “Buddhist taiko”:

From the Nara Period (seventh to eighth century), *horaku* developed as an effective means to teach Buddhist ideas. The performing arts that came to be used were *gigaku* (masked dances popular in the seventh century); *gagaku* (instrumental art music with song and dance performed in the Imperial Court); *mōsō biwa* (a blind priest tradition); and *kyogen* (comic plays), to mention a few examples. (Asai 1985, 163).

Hōraku was practiced in Buddhist temples in the United States beginning in the early 20th Century. Several temples maintained chanting and *gagaku* groups; indeed, Kinnara Taiko was (and still is) tied to a *gagaku* performance group at the Senshin Buddhist temple. Meanwhile, temples often hosted elaborately staged plays – in Japanese – that “ranged from light comedies to rather heavily dramatic morality and period plays” (Asai 1985, 164). Many of these practices declined post World-War II, during a period that Asai calls “the Americanization of Japanese Buddhism” that emphasized the participation of Japanese-American youth in temple activities and placed less importance on *hōraku* activities. However, many ensembles were revived in the late 1960s.¹⁹⁵

The discord between Tanaka and the members of Kinnara Taiko was the result of two different approaches to the history of the art form. Tanaka emphasized a connection to Japan in his approach to *wadaiko*, viewing festival music and the performance legacies of Osuwa Daiko

¹⁹⁵ This was tied to broader movements within the Japanese-American community, discussed in the following section.

and Sukeroku Taiko as the basis for tradition. Kinnara Taiko members, meanwhile, drew from a different performance tradition. While this discord eventually dissipated, it nevertheless signaled the beginning of varying approaches towards *wadaiko* performance in the United States. These two approaches would spread congruently as the art form spread across the United States. They would even be brought together at times, as was the case in the early 1970s with the rise of San Jose Taiko, a group that merged the influences of both Tanaka Seiichi and Kinnara Taiko.

5.3 SAN JOSE TAIKO: COMBINING DIVERGENT APPROACHES TO WADAIKO

By the early 1970s, the activities of the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai and Kinnara Taiko were becoming well known in the San Francisco Bay and Los Angeles areas, drawing large crowds at their performances. The groups were especially popular with young Japanese-Americans, for the rise of *wadaiko* in the United States was taking place during the development of “a nascent Asian American political consciousness and an emphasis on ethnic solidarity” (Yoon 2001, 422). Socially- and politically-conscious youth and young adults began to search for a means to express a sense of ethnic identity that had been lost post-World War II, particularly amongst the Japanese-American community. In reaction to the internment of over 100,000 people of Japanese descent on the Pacific coast, many second-generation Japanese-Americans adopted a policy of assimilation, looking to not stand out. Their children, however, battled “what was viewed as the stiff assimilationist outlook of their parents’ generation and the prevalent stereotype of the ‘quiet Japanese’” (Fromartz and Greenfield 1998).

Wadaiko performance was viewed as one such way to fight these stereotypes. In San Jose, a group of community activists that were working to develop services for *issei* – the first

generation of Japanese immigrants to the United States – found themselves drawn to the art form “because it was strong, loud, Japanese, and required a group of players” (Hirabayashi and Hirabayashi 2005). In 1973, they founded San Jose Taiko at part of the Young Buddhist Association at the San Jose Buddhist Church (Otsuka 1997, 31). To the young activists, *wadaiko* was the perfect art for their purposes; as San Jose Taiko founding members Roy and PJ Hirabayashi later stated, “a loud, in-your-face art form with Asian roots seemed the ideal contemporary cultural catalyst for community building” (Hirabayashi and Hirabayashi 2005). The idea of community building was particularly important given efforts at the time to revitalize San Jose’s Japantown, one of only three remaining in the United States (the others being in San Francisco and Los Angeles). Through *wadaiko* performance, they believe they could “build a community of players to pay homage to the hard work and sacrifice of the *Issei* and *Nisei* – first- and second-generation Japanese Americans – who faced racism and oppression in North America” (Hirabayashi and Hirabayashi 2005).¹⁹⁶

Drawing upon their connection to the Buddhist church, San Jose Taiko began activities with the assistance of Kinnara Taiko, who not only taught them a few basic pieces but also

¹⁹⁶ Much has been written on the relationship between *wadaiko*, the Asian-American Movement, and Japanese-American/Asian-American identity. See, for example, Kimberly Powell, “Drumming against the Quiet: The Sounds of Asian American Identity in an Amorphous Landscape,” *Qualitative Inquiry* 14, no. 6 (2008); Yoshitaka Terada, “Shifting Identities of Taiko Music in America,” in *Transcending Boundaries: Asian Musics in North America* Yoshitaka Terada (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2001); Deborah Wong, “Noisy Intersection: Ethnicity, Authenticity and Ownership in Asian American Taiko,” in *Diasporas and Interculturalism in Asian Performing Arts: Translating Traditions* Um Hae-kyung (New York: Routledge, 2005); Paul J. Yoon, “‘She’s Really Become Japanese Now!’: Taiko Drumming and Asian American Identifications,” *American Music* 19, no. 4 (2001).

taught them how to make drums. Tanaka Seiichi soon learned that a group was beginning activities in San Jose, and invited the group to come study with him. Taking him up on his offer, beginning in 1974 several members of San Jose Taiko traveled to San Francisco every weekend to attend San Francisco Taiko Doukukai practices. During this time, they learned the basics of the Sukeroku and Osuwa Daiko styles of *wadaiko* performance as well as Tanaka's own emerging style. Through these activities, San Jose Taiko moved beyond the loose organization and approach to performance taken by Kinnara Taiko members and closer towards the approach espoused by Tanaka.

However, Tanaka soon encouraged the performers to strike out on their own. According to founding member PJ Hirabayashi, after one year Tanaka encouraged the members to “go off, and create your music, concentrate on your group.”¹⁹⁷ As San Jose Taiko members began to seek out their own form of expression, they once again looked to Kinnara Taiko. During their ideological conflict with Tanaka, Kinnara members came to terms with their own perspective on *wadaiko* performance. As later explained by member Johnny Mori:

And so we thought about it, and then all of a sudden at the same time, it was like, “Wait a minute. Everybody at Senshin considers it to be taiko.” They’re very, very proud of it. This is some years after. They finally got over the fact that... They accepted us, and they’re very proud of us because we were able to play all these different venues and stuff. We were getting kind of good. We thought we were getting good. So all of a sudden, we go, “Well wait a minute. We’re not

¹⁹⁷ As told during a discussion panel on February 2, 2013 at the 2013 East Coast Taiko Conference, held at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island.

playing traditional Japanese taiko. We're playing Japanese American taiko."

Japanese American Buddhist taiko. So that kind of made us reflect upon what we were doing. To put a name on what we were trying to do. So that helped us.¹⁹⁸

Kinnara Taiko created a different sense of *wadaiko* identity than what was promoted by Tanaka, based on their experiences in the United States – not 'Japanese' *wadaiko*, but 'Japanese-American' *wadaiko*.¹⁹⁹

San Jose Taiko members latched on to this perspective, finding that it related to their own activist experiences. In addition, there was a realization that they could not become a group in the same mold as Tanaka's group. According to PJ Hirabayashi:

We didn't have the type of opportunities to learn from Japan... we had to create our own way. We don't want to copy the songs from Japan, because we felt it was distinctly the identity of that particular culture... We had to be true to ourselves, create music that represented our experience of having grown up in America.²⁰⁰

Rather than utilizing Tanaka's formalized hierarchical structure influenced by martial arts, they embraced their status as a "taiko group without a leader" (Otsuka 1997, 32). Group decisions were made democratically, a process closer to Kinnara Taiko than the single teacher-approach found in San Francisco. At the same time, however, they did take some elements from Tanaka's

¹⁹⁸ <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/clips/729/> (accessed March 4, 2013)

¹⁹⁹ The political and ethnic nature of this term has implications for a greater understanding of *wadaiko* in the United States, but unfortunately such an approach is outside the scope of this dissertation. See the sources cited in Footnote 37 for more on this topic.

²⁰⁰ From the February 2, 2013 East Coast Taiko Conference discussion panel.

approach, such as bowing at the beginning and end of each practice as well as when entering their practice space.

Meanwhile, group members decided early on to not play the pieces they were learning from Tanaka. In an important development in the establishment of their own style, San Jose Taiko members began to compose pieces that embraced their own musical influences. This was also part of the movement towards becoming a group without a leader. Compositions were composed by group members, but the process was not singular – that is, all members had input on the creation of a work, and the final product could be seen as much the product of the group’s artistic vision as from a single individual.

Members drew from the music that they had grown up listening to: rock, jazz, funk, and Latin, a process that was inspired by the efforts of Kinnara Taiko (as described in the previous section). In embracing a different set of musical influences than Tanaka, they began to evolve the *wadaiko* style they learned in San Francisco “into a style that joins the traditional rhythms of Japanese drumming with other world rhythms, including African, Brazilian, Filipino, Latin, and jazz, bridging many styles, while still resonating with the Asian soul in America.”²⁰¹ One work composed with this approach was “Gendai ni Ikiru,” which has remained a standard within the San Jose Taiko repertoire for over thirty years.

²⁰¹ <http://www.taiko.org/history-traditional-japanese-drumming-rhythm-world-beats/> (accessed October 30,

5.3.1 “Gendai ni Ikiru”

Composed in 1978 by Gary Tsujimoto, “Gendai ni Ikiru” (meaning “Living in the Present,” often called simply “Gendai”) is a core example of the manner in which San Jose Taiko members attempted to create a sound that reflected their own musical experiences. Liner notes for the piece describe it as a composition that:

...blends a simple taiko beat with jazz rhythm patterns. Modern and traditional rhythms created in this piece grew out of the composer’s love for jazz music. (San Jose Taiko 1993)

Even as the group members were looking to create their own musical style, they still took inspiration from what they had learned from Tanaka. Like many of Tanaka’s works (such as “Sokobayashi”), “Gendai” features a combination of rhythmic melodies and improvisational sections; it opens with a series of melodies in the first half, followed by a second half dominated by improvisations. This can be traced back to Osuwa Daiko to some degree, with many of Oguchi Daihachi’s pieces featuring varying degrees of improvisation (largely by him on his taiko set). At the same time, Sukeroku Taiko also had improvisation-heavy pieces like “Midare Uchi” and “Yodan Uchi” (see Chapter 3.2.1, 3.5). However, a particular compositional scheme emerged in the United States separate from what was happening in Japan. Many pieces that were composed in the 1970s – including “Gendai ni Ikiru” and Tanaka’s “Sokobayashi” – have a particular framework:

1. Melody (potentially with several sub-melodies and/or preceded by an introduction)

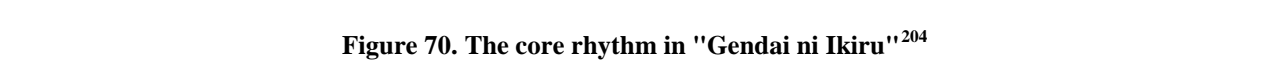
2. Improvisation (potentially with connecting material between each soloist)
3. Recapitulation of Melody

This structure has much in common with the ternary form commonly used in American jazz and popular music, a theme-variation-theme organizational scheme also called ABA, song form, or head-solo-head (“head” being a jazz term for the theme or main melody) (Owens 2001).²⁰² It has been used as a primary organizational scheme for *wadaiko* groups in the United States that wish to highlight improvisation in their works – beyond “Sokobayashi” and “Gendai,” there are works like “Matsuri,” an arrangement of “Midare Uchi” by Tanaka that features a series of set rhythms taken from *bon daiko* combined with improvisations.²⁰³ In many cases, the recapitulation of the theme is much shorter than the opening statement, creating an unbalanced feel – this is the case in “Sokobayashi,” for example, where the recapitulation is much faster and shorter than the original statement of the theme, and this imbalance is also found in “Gendai.” The ternary form as used in *wadaiko* works in the United States often has an introduction, but the basic ternary form is at the core of the work.

“Gendai” begins with the repeated statement of a short two-bar core rhythm found in almost every section of the work (Figure 70). A combination of on- and off the beat notes, the syncopated notes in this rhythm are particularly emphasized in a fashion that gives it a feel that

²⁰² See also W. Dean Sutcliffe and Michael Tilmouth, “Ternary Form,” in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

²⁰³ After an opening statement of the *bon daiko* rhythms (often repeated several times) in “Matsuri,” an extended improvisational passage begins with many members of the ensemble given time to adlib, before the piece ends with a recapitulation of the opening theme.



This opening melody, as well as many other rhythmic phrases in “Gendai,” features rhythms shared among multiple players (seen in the second and third lines of the above transcription). This is another legacy of the style developed by Oguchi Daihachi and brought to the United States by Tanaka Seiichi, as is the inclusion of choreographic movements during rests (circular motions and points with the drumsticks, seen in the video). Additionally, many of the works of both Osuwa Daiko and San Jose Taiko are composed with a swing feel – that is, a triple-based rhythmic feel in which the first and third notes of a group of three per beat are used in the primary rhythmic foundation.²⁰⁵

Where “Gendai” differs from works composed by Oguchi Daihachi is the use of ternary form. Osuwa Daiko works rarely feature this ABA organizational scheme, instead having a simple binary form or a cyclical form in which the same group of rhythmic patterns is repeated many times. The jazz feel espoused as being a part of what separates San Jose Taiko’s music

²⁰⁵ Written music for works with a swing feel are typically written in a duple meter, with the performance note “Swing” at the beginning of the score. This tells performers that the music is to be performed with a triple-based rhythmic feel.

This is used partially because rhythms in a swing feel rarely include notes on the second of the three parts of a triple pattern. With the emphasis on the first and third notes of the pattern, using eighth-notes with a “Swung” creates a cleaner score (free of triplet markings). At the same time, a swing feel is sometimes described by musicians as not being a true “triplet;” that is, it is not an exact subdivision of a note into three parts. As such, a triplet does not appropriately convey the rhythmic feel of the music. Of course, neither does a duple-feel, but standard convention for written jazz music and other styles that use a swing feel is to use the duple meter with a “Swing” performance note.

A rhythm played in this style – that is, a variation of a triple-feel – is often described as being ‘swung.’

from its Japanese predecessors, then, is manifested in both compositional form and rhythmic content.

At the same time, the use of syncopation is not the only thing “Gendai” has in common with the works of Oguchi Daihachi, with which San Jose Taiko members would have been familiar following their lessons with Tanaka Seiichi. The basic instrumentation of the work follows the Osuwa Daiko style (described in Chapter 2.1.1): *nagadō-daiko* playing the main rhythmic melody and the *shime-daiko* providing a rhythmic foundation (in the case of “Gendai,” a swung eighth-note ostinato). Further, two *atarigane* with different pitches, placed on a table and played with drumsticks by one person, are used in much the same fashion as the *tettō*, playing the same ostinato as the *shime-daiko* while switching between a high-pitched *atarigane* and a low-pitched one to provide sonic variety. This instrumentation style, brought to the United States by Tanaka Seiichi, would prove to be influential as *wadaiko* began to spread across the nation.

However, there is one instrumentation choice with related compositional techniques that not only connects “Gendai” to jazz music but demonstrates some of the changes that came with the spread of *wadaiko* to the United States. In addition to the drums and *atarigane*, the instrumentation also includes a gourd called a *hyōtan* (a Japanese gourd similar to a calabash), with beads either inside or strung around it in a manner similar to the West African *shekere*. However, over time the group has replaced their *hyōtan* with actual *shekere*, which is rounder in shape, but the usage within compositions is the same (Figure 43). Videos from the 1980s show San Jose Taiko members playing a true *hyōtan* during “Gendai,” suggesting that the switch to the

shekere may have occurred at some point to the availability of instruments (and perhaps ease of performance).²⁰⁶



Figure 72. San Jose Taiko member playing an African *shekere* at the 2012 San Jose Obon.

San Jose, CA. July 14, 2012.

Photo by Flickr user –Mark—

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/34186459@N00/7591030212/> (accessed November 18, 2012).

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For the majority of “Gendai,” the *hyōtan* plays a rhythmic ostinato similar to the *shime-daiko* and *atarigane*, but in transition sections – such as the bridge between the first and second rhythmic melodies in the A section of the work – the *hyōtan* changes patterns and plays just on beats two and four (Figure 73; this section can be seen in video clip “5-9-SJT-Gendai 2”).²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ Indeed,

²⁰⁷ About this transcription: double-stemmed notes in the *shime-daiko* part denote hits by both hands. The notes above and below the line in the *atarigane* part refer to two different *atarigane*, one higher-sounding and one lower-sounding.

This is accompanied by a change in the rhythms played on the *shime*-daiko, with the player changing to hit the basic beat but using both hands on beat two and four to emphasize those beats, creating a feel akin to the hi-hat or snare drum of a jazz drum set hitting on beats two and four that is often called a “backbeat” by jazz and popular music drummers (Baur 2002).

(Bridge)

Swing

3x, each *nagadō* group entering in successive repeats

Nagadō-daiko

Shime-daiko

Atarigane

Hyotan

(Second melody)

Nagadō

Shime

Atarigane

Hyotan

Nagadō

Shime

Atarigane

Hyotan

Figure 73. First bridge and second rhythmic melody of "Gendai ni Ikiru"

Following the opening section A of “Gendai,” which features two different melodic themes, the B section enters that features a series of improvisations by each of the *nagadō-daiko* players. The so-called “Gendai rhythm” – seen above in Figure 70 – is used to transition between each soloist, repeated several times in a build from soft to loud, beginning with only one player playing the rhythm with each other drummer entering in succession. After all players have improvised, the piece ends with a short restatement of the “Gendai rhythm” repeated four times, a modified return to the theme in the ABA ternary form. Much like “Sokobayashi,” the return to the theme is much shorter than the initial statement.

Liner notes for “Gendai ni Ikiru” claim that the work meshes “modern and traditional beats.” However, with its usage of jazz-inspired rhythmic feel and organizational techniques, it is hard to judge what is ‘traditional’ about the piece. Rhythmic phrases have more in common with Western jazz than with Japanese festival music; this is not to say that there is no syncopation in Japanese music, but the accented patterns and groupings of rhythms clearly draw their influence from jazz. Similarly, the rhythmic ostinato playing by the *shime-daiko* and *atarigane* is indeed something that can be found in Japanese music, but it is difficult to call a simple ostinato a “traditional beat;” such a term is perhaps better saved for rhythms such as those used in Kodo’s “Miyake” (see Chapter 4.6.1), rhythmic patterns derived from specific performance traditions.

Perhaps the evoking of tradition relies more on a conceptual understanding, based on the fact that taiko – drums from Japan – are being used within a new musical context. This is not that different from the approach taken by Oguchi Daihachi, who separated the music he was playing from the associations taiko had with Shinto rite. Such a conception allows for new works to be created utilizing musical concepts taken from Western musical genres like jazz, while still invoking a sense of tradition by using taiko to perform this music. At the same time, the simple

timbre of the instrument evokes its use in festivals and at Shinto shrines, separating the sound of the drums from the rhythms they perform.

Nevertheless, the larger legacy of not only “Gendai ni Ikiru” but also Tanaka Seiichi’s “Sokobayashi” is not necessarily the discourses used in connection to them, but the introduction of new musical forms and the inclusion of different performance practices. The inclusion of ternary form into *wadaiko* music had a huge impact in the United States, becoming as important of a compositional model as regional festival music had been to Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko.²⁰⁸ Meanwhile, the work of Kinnara Taiko drew from a new source of inspiration, with connections to Buddhist *horaku*. With the spread to the United States, then, *wadaiko* music moved in new directions influenced by the different experiences and musical inspirations of members of the first three groups in California. These groups would have a further influence as the art form began to spread beyond San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Jose, guiding the expansion of *wadaiko* across the United States. At the same time, these groups had a huge impact on the further development of intercultural ties with the genre, building lasting relationships with groups in Japan.

²⁰⁸ It could be argued that Leonard Eto’s “Irodori,” discussed in Chapter 4.6.2, also has a ternary form. However, this piece was composed much later than “Sokobayashi” and “Gendai,” nearly a decade after “Gendai” and almost two decades after “Sokobayashi.” At the same time, “Gendai” and “Irodori” both have a common influence: the American popular music that their composers listened to as they grew up.

5.4 SPREADING WADAIKO IN THE UNITED STATES AND BUILDING INTERCULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

By the end of the 1970s, San Francisco Taiko Dojo, Kinnara Taiko, and San Jose Taiko had established themselves as thriving performance troupes, appearing at local and regional arts and cultural festivals. Their activities soon became known around the nation through assorted social and professional networks, and others became interested in creating their own *wadaiko* group. Each of these first three groups had a part in the growth of the art form in the United States during the late-1970s and 1980s.

One of the first *wadaiko* groups outside of California was founded in 1976 in Denver, following a workshop with Tanaka Seiichi.²⁰⁹ Indeed, much like his mentor Oguchi Daihachi in Japan, Tanaka had a hand in the creation of many *wadaiko* groups following the creation of the San Francisco Taiko Doukoku in the late 1960s. As people saw the group perform, they invited Tanaka to come and teach them how to play *wadaiko*. In this manner, the performance styles of Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko, combined with Tanaka's own nascent variation, began to spread across the United States.

This influence is particularly seen in the common use of *naname* slanted stands and the Sukeroku Taiko performance style across the United States. In Japan – particularly in the 1970s and 1980s – this performance style was unique to Sukeroku Taiko; even today, it is rare to find in Japan a group using these stands and the blended techniques of Tokyo *Shitamachi*-area festival drumming and theatrical *hōgaku* (see Chapter 3). However, due to Tanaka's influence this style became one of the prevailing *wadaiko* performance styles in the United States.

²⁰⁹ <http://www.denvertaiko.org/about.html> (accessed February 16, 2013)

That is not to say that the Sukeroku Taiko style was the only style to be spread as Tanaka taught classes. Rather, as he gave workshops across the country Tanaka taught his emerging hybrid style, combining the techniques developed by Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko. He also taught the music he brought back from Japan, with Osuwa Daiko works like “Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi” and Sukeroku Taiko pieces like “Yodan Uchi” becoming part of the repertoire of many groups. Even after groups started composing their own works, they were often modeled after these pieces as well as those composed by Tanaka (such as “Sokobayashi” and “Tsunami”). In this manner, the ternary form used by Tanaka in “Sokobayashi” and other pieces became one of the primary compositional forms used by *wadaiko* groups in the United States.

At the same time, Kinnara Taiko had a large impact on the growth of *wadaiko* across the United States, tapping into the network of Buddhist churches and temples present across the country.²¹⁰ One of the first groups was founded in Chicago in 1977, as the Midwest Buddhist Temple Taiko group was created with the help of Kinnara founder Reverend Mas Kodani.²¹¹ Meanwhile, the first group on the East Coast of the United States was founded in 1979 at the New York Buddhist Church, taking the name Soh Daiko.²¹² These groups benefited not just from the Buddhist church connections, but also from Kinnara Taiko members’ experiences building

²¹⁰ Even though buildings devoted to Buddhist worship are typically called temples, in the United States there is also a network of “Buddhist churches.” The difference seems to be in name only, as the same activities take place at both.

For example, the organization Buddhist Churches of America has a listing for both temples and churches. <http://buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/> (accessed March 4, 2013)

²¹¹ <http://www.taikoconference.org/groups/midwest-buddhist-temple-taiko-group> (accessed February 16, 2013)

²¹² <http://sohdaiko.org/about/> (accessed February 16, 2013)

drums. Indeed, it was this innovation in instrument construction that enabled *wadaiko* to spread across the United States, as it allowed groups to start up without relying on a connection to Japan to purchase equipment. All that was needed were tools like hammers and carjacks – the latter being used in a system devised by Kinnara Taiko to stretch the drumheads – to turn old barrels and rawhide skins into *nagadō-daiko*.

Soh Daiko and other upcoming ensembles also benefited from another aspect of the advancement of *wadaiko* in the United States: a generation of performers that learned from Tanaka Seiichi and the founding members of Kinnara Taiko. In addition to listing Rev. Kodani of Kinnara Taiko and Rev. Ron Miyamura of Midwest Buddhist Temple Taiko as early instructors for the group, Soh Daiko's website also lists Russel Baba as a major influence.²¹³ An early member of the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai and professional musician, Baba gave workshops for several groups before he and his wife Jeanne Mercer – another member of the San Francisco Doukukai in the 1970s – moved to Mt. Shasta, California and founded their own ensemble, Shasta Taiko.²¹⁴

Baba and Mercer were not the only performers to leave San Francisco and form their own groups; many other members of San Francisco Taiko Dojo, Kinnara Taiko, and San Jose Taiko eventually left these groups and moved to other places in the United States, where they soon formed their own groups. Not only did this contribute to the growth of *wadaiko* across the

²¹³ <http://sohdaiko.org/about/> (accessed February 16, 2013)

²¹⁴ Russel Baba and Jeanne Mercer had a different sort of impact through their group Shasta Taiko, which largely began as a youth group. See Chapter 7 for more about this development.

country, but it helped bring the art form to areas without large Japanese-American populations.²¹⁵

San Jose Taiko, even though they are considered part of the group of first three *wadaiko* groups in the United States (often separated from the other groups that were to follow), was one of those groups that benefited from the guidance of Kinnara Taiko and Tanaka Seiichi. However, all three groups also had a different sort of impact, by aiding in the growth of intercultural relationships within the art form. The growth of *wadaiko* across the United States coincided with Ondekoza's appearances in the country (as described in Chapter 4). The group from Sado's 1975 American debut at the Boston Marathon occurred one year before Denver Taiko was formed. By the time the group began touring regularly across the United States, there was an emerging network of ensembles to serve as an audience. Indeed, many cite the tours by Ondekoza – and later Kodo – as a major factor in the spread of *wadaiko* across the country.²¹⁶

These American groups were also helping to provide support for the Japanese group as it toured. Many members of the early American *wadaiko* groups tell stories of Ondekoza relying upon groups at local Buddhist temples when in town for a concert; members of Kinnara Taiko, for example, describe how the group would run from the apartments at which they were staying to rehearse at the Senshin Buddhist Temple before running to the theater for a performance

²¹⁵ For example, Burlington Taiko from Burlington, Vermont was founded in 1987 by Stuart Paton, a former student of Tanaka Seiichi at the San Francisco Taiko Dojo. <http://www.burlingtontaiko.org/about-us/burlington-taiko.html> (accessed February 16, 2013)

²¹⁶ As stated, for example, by Kinnara Taiko member Donna Ebata in an interview for a segment entitled “Kodo in America” on the 2005 DVD *Big Drum: Taiko in the United States*, published by the Japanese American National Museum. *Big Drum: Taiko in the United States*.

(Reverend Mas Kodani, in an interview for the "Kodo in America" segment of *Big Drum: Taiko in the United States* 2005). Kodo, meanwhile, acknowledges that American groups “deeply supported [them] in various ways since Ondekoza’s first North American tour” (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 96).

These relationships would be further deepened in the mid-1980s with the creation of an organization called Kodo America, founded in order to, in the words of San Jose Taiko founding member Roy Hirabayashi, “build the popularity of Kodo in the United States...but they were also concerned how as a taiko group from Japan they could help the taiko community in the United States” (personal interview, November 3, 2011)., Kodo members gave workshops for *wadaiko* groups in the United States through Kodo America and otherwise worked to further developed ties and relationships across the nation. Members of San Jose Taiko and Kinnara Taiko were on the board of directors for the organization. Following the 1987 death of Kawauchi Toshio – an original Ondekoza member and founding member of Kodo who became the group’s first managing director (see Chapter 4.6 for more about this) – the organization folded, but the idea continued to ferment until the beginning of the 21st Century. In 2002, Kodo Arts Sphere America (KASA) was established, an organization whose mission statement describes it as “a United States public benefit nonprofit corporation established to encourage, enable and support programs and opportunities for North Americans to study and understand the traditional and contemporary Japanese music of the taiko and its related performing arts.”²¹⁷ Alan Okada of Soh Daiko, Kevin Higa of Kinnara Taiko, and PJ Hirabayashi of San Jose Taiko, are currently on the board of directors. The organization’s primary activities are workshop tours; in addition to bringing Kodo members to the United States, it also sponsors the bi-annual KASAMIX tour, in

²¹⁷ <http://www.kodo.or.jp/kasa/mission/mission.html> (Accessed November 9, 2012)

which *wadaiko* performers from the United States (and also Canada, as the art form has spread there as well) travel to Japan for several weeks, including a week-long stay on Sado Island.

Kodo is not the only Japanese group with a direct impact on *wadaiko* in the United States. As noted earlier, in 1986, Oguchi Daihachi helped to establish St. Louis Osuwa Daiko, donating drums to the group and working with them as part of a sister city relationship between St. Louis and Suwa.²¹⁸ This was partially aided by Tanaka Seiichi, who in the 1970s began to bring his teachers – Oguchi as well as members of Sukeroku Taiko – to the United States for workshops and performances. In 1981, he started the International Taiko Festival, a yearly concert featuring performances by San Francisco Taiko Dojo, associated groups (such as those founded by former Taiko Dojo members), and visiting groups from Japan. Tanaka also worked to bring other performance styles to the United States beyond *wadaiko* – he is one of the few people in the United States with permission to teach and perform the folk drumming style *Gojinjō Taiko* from Ishikawa Prefecture in western Japan, recognized by the Japanese government as an Intangible Cultural Heritage.²¹⁹

Even with their divergent influences, however, all three groups have actively engaged in efforts to build up relations between *wadaiko* artists in Japan and the United States. Tanaka Seiichi and San Francisco Taiko Dojo have routinely worked to bring Japanese performers to the United States. San Jose Taiko and Kodo, meanwhile, have routinely worked together in various ways to strengthen ties between *wadaiko* in the two countries.

Further, beginning in the mid-1980s *wadaiko* groups from the United States began to travel to Japan to perform, a reversal of the normal procedure of Japanese groups coming to the

²¹⁸ <http://www.stltaiko.com/aboutus.php> (Accessed November 9, 2012)

²¹⁹ http://www.sftaiko.com/about_tanaka.html (accessed March 4, 2013)

United States. In 1985, Tanaka Seiichi and the San Francisco Taiko Dojo performed at the 1985 Tsukuba World Expo as a part of an exhibition entitled “Nihon no Taiko,” the first time that an American group had played in Japan. Two years later, in 1987, San Jose Taiko was invited by Den Tagayasu to present joint concert programs in Japan with Ondekoza, an experience that PJ Hirabayashi cites as being a large factor in the group’s decision to become a professional organization (the first professional *wadaiko* performance group in the United States).²²⁰ These visits followed one by San Jose Taiko members earlier in the decade, when Roy Hirabayashi, PJ Hirabayashi, and several other performers toured with the newly formed-Kodo on their first tour of the United States, and following the tour traveled to Sado Island to train with Kodo members for several months (personal interview, November 3, 2012). This exchange also directly influenced the creation of repertoire. San Jose Taiko’s work “Ei Ja Nai Ka,” for example, is a *bon odori*-inspired piece with music by PJ Hirabayashi and song lyrics written by Kodo’s Fujimoto Yoko.

By the 1980s, then, there was a great degree of intercultural exchange between Japanese and American *wadaiko* groups. Another agent in this process was Kenny Endo, a former member of Kinnara Taiko and the San Francisco Taiko Dojo who in 1980 travelled to Japan to begin studying with members of Sukeroku Taiko and Osuwa Daiko. Alan Okada of Soh Daiko and others describe him as a direct line to Japan, helping groups to purchase instruments and other performance necessities. With his assistance, American groups were able to acquire instruments from Japanese companies like the Miyamoto Unosuke Shōten drum manufacturing company, based in Tokyo. At the 1985 World Expo, he and his wife Chizuko – who also studied at the San Francisco Taiko Dojo and with members of Sukeroku Taiko in Japan – played alongside San

²²⁰ From the February 2, 2013 East Coast Taiko Conference discussion panel

Francisco Taiko Dojo as well as with Oedo Sukeroku Taiko. Indeed, at the same time that Leonard Eto joined Kodo, Kenny Endo was a member of Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, signaling the beginning of American performers' participation in Japanese *wadaiko* groups.²²¹

Kenny Endo was not just participating in Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, however. Indeed, in the 1980s he began to explore new musical directions for *wadaiko* performance, performing as a soloist as well as a member of a group. He was not alone in this venture, for Hayashi Eitetsu – who had moved to Tokyo after leaving Kodo – was also exploring creative opportunities for a *wadaiko* soloist. Together, the two of them would help to push the art form in new directions, forever changing the nature of *wadaiko* performance.

²²¹ This trend would particularly advance in the 1990s, particularly as Den Tagayasu began to recruit American performers into Ondekoza.

6.0 HAYASHI EITETSU & KENNY ENDO: SEEKING DIFFERENT FORMS OF WADAIKO EXPRESSION

In the summer of 1986, a group of *wadaiko* artists from Japan embarked on a short performance tour of the west coast of North America. Accompanied by several California-based groups, they presented a mixed program of contemporary *wadaiko* works and selections from Japanese folk music and classical theater in performances in Vancouver, Oakland, and Los Angeles. Of course, by the mid-1980s a *wadaiko* concert by Japanese performers was a common occurrence in North America; it had been eighteen years since Sukeroku Taiko first came to the United States in 1968, and Ondekoza and their ‘successors’ Kodo had routinely been touring the continent for ten years. However, this tour featured something new: the main artists on the tour were two soloists, Hayashi Eitetsu and Kenny Endo.

One concert took place on May 11, 1986, at the Calvin Simmons Theater in Oakland, CA. The first half opened with several pieces by San Jose Taiko, who had recently celebrated their 10-year anniversary and was in the midst of their evolution from a community group to a professional organization. They were followed by former Ondekoza member Hayashi Eitetsu, who played one of his compositions, “Sennen no Kamoku.” This piece especially highlighted the taiko set, a grouping of different sized taiko played at the same time that was first used by Oguchi Daihachi with Osuwa Daiko (see Chapter 2). Hayashi’s portion of the concert was followed by a series of works performed by former San Francisco Taiko Dojo and Oedo

Sukeroku Taiko member Kenny Endo, who began with a duet with performer Hosoya Masashi between *ko-tsuzumi* (Endo) and *ō-tsuzumi* (Hosoya) taken from *hōgaku*, the music of Noh and kabuki theater.²²² This was followed by an arrangement of Sukeroku Taiko's "Shiraume Daiko" and "Matsuri Daiko" for *ō-daiko*, *ko-tsuzumi*, and *fue*, accompanied at times by a lion dance (see Chapter 3.4.3 for a discussion of these pieces). Members of San Francisco Taiko Dojo next took the stage for two works: "Tsunami" (see Chapter 5.1.2) and "Hibiki Tamashii" ("Thundering Soul") the latter consisting of a series of solos on a single *nagadō-daiko* modeled after the Gojinjō Daiko folk drumming style from Ishikawa Prefecture in Japan.²²³ Endo then returned to the stage for "Ancient Beginnings," a nearly-twenty minute duet for taiko set and saxophone, featuring former San Francisco Taiko Dojo member Russel Baba on saxophone. After a short intermission, Hayashi and Endo played a series of duets.²²⁴

Those in attendance at this and other concerts on the tour were witness to the emergence of a new type of *wadaiko* performance. The genre, previously the domain of ensembles, was evolving in new directions in the 1980s as some members of *wadaiko* groups began to strike out on their own. Whereas in the 1950s Oguchi Daihachi raised taiko up from their position as accompanying instruments and made them the sole focus of musical performance, emerging soloists – that is, *wadaiko* performers not affiliated with a single group, appearing in concert by

²²² The name of this piece is unclear, as there are no programs or set lists remaining from this concert.

²²³ A drumming style in which several drummers wearing masks play a single drum, Gojinjō Daiko was one of the drumming styles studied by San Francisco Taiko Dojo founder Tanaka Seiichi.

http://www.sftaiko.com/about_tanaka.html (accessed February 24, 2013)

²²⁴ Unfortunately, no record remains of the second half of this concert. The knowledge that the second half consisted of several duets is based on information provided by Endo as well as people in attendance at these concerts.

themselves or accompanied by other artists – began to explore the potentials of taiko as instruments for individual musical expression, removed from the constraints of an ensemble performance environment.

While the idea of striking out on one’s own was by itself a new development, these soloists also began trying out different instrumentation possibilities; among other ideas, they expanded the taiko set beyond the small two or three *shime-daiko/nagadō-daiko* setup created by Oguchi Daihachi, introducing – or perhaps more correctly, re-interpreting, as this was an evolution of what Oguchi had started several decades prior – a new mode of performance for *wadaiko* artists. At the forefront of these changes were Hayashi Eitetsu and Kenny Endo. Based in Tokyo in the 1980s, Hayashi and Endo both came from a background of group *wadaiko* performance before they decided to strike out on their own. Working both as individuals and occasionally in tandem, the two artists helped to guide the evolution of *wadaiko* away from the ensemble focus that had previously driven much of the development of the musical genre.

6.1 HAYASHI EITETSU

As the original members of Ondekoza broke away from Den Tagayasu and started upon the path towards becoming Kodo (see Chapter 4.5), Hayashi Eitetsu – an original member who had served as the artistic driving force for much of Ondekoza’s activities since the beginning – began to notice a gap of sorts between himself and other members. It began when the members deliberated upon a new name for the group (as they could no longer use the name Ondekoza). As discussed in Chapter 5, Hayashi proposed the name “Kodo,” combining the Japanese characters for “drum” (*ko*) and “child” (*dō*) in an effort to reflect the idea of the sound of the taiko being

similar to the heartbeat within a mother's womb (Hayashi 1999, 53). However, following a performance in September 1981 at the Ikebukuro Sunshine Gekijō concert hall in Tokyo, group member Kawauchi Toshio – who had been elected to serve as the representative to speak to the audience, and would soon become Kodo's first managing director – stated that the name reflected the fact that the members would from that time forward approach playing the taiko with the innocence of a child, a different meaning than Hayashi had intended. Hayashi put that dissimilarity in perspective aside, but soon a series of creative differences and confrontations in rehearsals led Hayashi to decide to leave the group (Hayashi 2012, 56-57). At the beginning of 1982, he left Sado for Tokyo and began a career as a *wadaiko* soloist (Hayashi 2012, 58).²²⁵

This was a major development, not just for Hayashi but for the *wadaiko* world in general. To that point, of course, there had been plenty of instances where an individual would come to the forefront during a performance. Osuwa Daiko, for instance, routinely featured Oguchi Daihachi behind his taiko set with everyone else in formation around him; beyond “Suwa Ikazuchi” (see Chapter 2.2), this was even more obvious in works like “Ashura” (referenced in Chapter 2.3 and 2.4), which amounted to an extended solo by Oguchi on his taiko set with a

²²⁵ This is Hayashi's side of the story, described in his various books. Eitetsu Hayashi, *Ashita No Taiko Uchi E* 明日の太鼓打ちへ [To Tomorrow's Taiko Players] (Tokyo: Shobunsha, 1992); *Hayashi Eitetsu Taiko Jitsugetsu Dokusō No Kiseki* 林英哲 太鼓日月 独走の軌跡 [Hayashi Eitetsu's Taiko Years: A Path Taken Alone] (Tokyo: Koudansha, 2012).

Official Kodo documents merely state that Hayashi decided to leave the group. Kodo Cultural Foundation, *Inochi Moyashite, Tatakeyo. -Kodo 30-Nen No Kiseki -* いのちもやして、たたけよ。－鼓童 30 年の軌跡－, 72.

rhythmic ostinato accompaniment provided by the rest of the ensemble. Similarly, Ondekoza had routinely featured Hayashi in their performances, particularly in *ō-daiko* solos.

And yet, the act of setting out entirely on one's own, to function as the sole creative force, was a new enterprise for a *wadaiko* artist. Hayashi later admitted that he “didn’t have any idea of what [he] wanted to do;” he simply knew that he wished to become a solo performer (Hayashi 2011). One of the first obstacles he had to overcome was the simple act of obtaining performance opportunities. In order to survive, and also as a way to expand his artistic horizons, Hayashi decided “to never turn down a job and accept any work that came [his] way” (Hayashi 2011). This resolution was partially aided by the era in which he decided to begin his solo career, as Japan in the early 1980s was in the midst of its period of hyper growth that would come crashing down at the end of the decade.²²⁶ During this time, there were a lot of what Hayashi calls “artsy events,” with a variety of companies, stores, and venues sponsoring musical performances and projects. Both Hayashi and his performance sponsors were interested as much creating an attention-grabbing performance in an unexpected environment as in creating an innovative musical experience; as he later described it, performances were often more about “the catabolic effect of having a taiko appear in a place you wouldn’t normally expect it” than about musical innovation (Hayashi 2011). Nevertheless, the activities helped to make Hayashi known as a solo artist. Early performances included “accompaniment for singers” and “opening ceremonies for commercial buildings and at parties” (Hayashi 2011).

²²⁶ This period is often called the “bubble economy,” a term coined by economist Christopher Wood. See Christopher Wood, *The Bubble Economy: Japan's Extraordinary Speculative Boom of the '80s and the Dramatic Bust of the '90s* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1992).

As he performed in a wide variety of venues, Hayashi began to develop his own unique performance style out of what he had used as a member of Ondekoza. He continued the solo *ō-daiko* performances for which he had become known; several of the requests he received asked specifically for such a performance. However, even in this familiar musical context he found it necessary to adapt to solo performance. As discussed in Chapter 4.3, the Ondekoza/Kodo *ō-daiko* feature utilizes a soloist and an accompanist; deprived of an accompanist to provide an underlying rhythmic foundation, Hayashi experimented with different ways of maintaining the rhythm while playing his solo. One method that he devised was what *wadaiko* artist Kageyama Isaku calls an “eighth note groove,” combinations of eighth notes “accented in groupings of 3 and 4, and triplet figures” (Kageyama 2012). Through a mixture of accent placement, rhythmic variation, and dynamic contrast, Hayashi was able to develop a way to keep his *ō-daiko* solos musically interesting while still providing a rhythmic foundation.

For example, a section from a 2010 improvisation entitled “Hi no Taiko, Tsuki no Taiko” (“Taiko of the Sun, Taiko of the Moon”) features different combinations of left and right drumstick hits, and rhythmic patterns that include variations of accented and unaccented notes (Figure 74). The left hand and right hand hits are placed on different parts of the drumhead, resulting in different sounds that add to the rhythmic variety of the improvisation (see video clip “6-1-Hayashi 1”).



Figure 74. An excerpt from Hayashi Eitetsu's *ō-daiko* improvisation "Hi no Taiko, Tsuki no Taiko"

The right hand hits at the end of the drumhead, while accented left hand notes are played in the center.

Hayashi compares the sonic spectrum created during his *ō-daiko* solos to painting:

...one idea that came to me was to use traditional Japanese *sumi* ink paintings as an image. Just as we sense color and space and distance within the gradations of monochromatic grays and black of the *sumi* ink painting, I thought that perhaps a similar image could be used for the supposed monotone of drum music. I tried a number of things like modifications in the drumsticks (*bachi*) and changing the surface areas I hit on the drum skin. (Hayashi 2011)

By hitting towards the edge of the drum, a much thinner, higher-sounding tone is created than what occurs when the center of the drum is hit. Similarly, a thinner drumstick produces a different sound than a thicker one. Hayashi also has experimented with using non-wooden sticks,

including small bamboo rods wrapped together in a manner similar to a broom (see video clip “6-2-Hayashi 2”). Utilizing a wide range of sounds and performance techniques, he developed an *ō-daiko* solo that was more sonically varied than what he had performed with Ondekoza.²²⁷

This sonic experimentation is akin to that attempted by Ishii Maki in “Monochrome.” Stepping away from the conventions of the *ō-daiko* solo, Hayashi was seeking new modes of performance. While the Ondekoza *ō-daiko* solos were akin to a marathon, playing the large drum loudly for a long period of time, Hayashi’s new solos had more sonic variety. Of course, the general form of his solos still follow the model he created in the 1970s – starting slow and gradually getting faster and more rhythmically complex before ending with a single loud hit – but the different drumsticks and integration of the sounds produced when hitting on different parts of the drumhead that he integrated into his solos help to separate them from what audiences see in Ondekoza and Kodo concerts (along with the many other groups have embraced the *ō-daiko* solo).

Of course, Hayashi could not rely on *ō-daiko* solos alone to further his career, so he began to compose new pieces to play in the different venues in which he was giving performances. In doing so, he began to develop his own musical style, which he later described as attempting to “express aspects of Japanese spirituality and thought” (Hayashi 2011). In addition to the sonic elements he explored in his *ō-daiko* solos, he also experimented with staging, costuming, and the choreography of playing the drums. One of the pieces that Hayashi

²²⁷ He also adjusted the build of the *ō-daiko* stand so that the various types of drumsticks could be placed underneath the drum so they could be immediately available, as seen in video clip “6-2-Hayashi 2.” This additional shelf is absent from the stand used by Ondekoza/Kodo.

developed early in his career, as he attempted to work through various ways to express this performance ideal, was “Sennen no Kamoku” (“The Quiet Ages”).

6.1.1 “Sennen no Kamoku”

A musical suite composed in 1985, Hayashi describes “Sennen no Kamoku” as “a theatrical presentation that always takes into account the flow of time during performance” (personal communication, December 2012). A four-part musical suite, it has since its debut undergone a number of revisions, to the point where a version performed in Berlin in 2000 was retitled “The Quiet Ages 2000/ Gassan Suite;” indeed, there is enough difference in musical content between the original and the 2000 revision that they could be considered separate pieces.²²⁸

Even as Hayashi has changed the musical content of “Sennen no Kamoku,” the basic framework has remained, each section made distinct through instrumentation and structure:

1. A section featuring a single *uchiwa-daiko*, played as Hayashi moves around the stage²²⁹

²²⁸ I am focusing on the original version in this dissertation, which I have seen via a video in a private library, as I believe it reflects Hayashi’s early efforts towards creating a new individual performance style.

Due to permission concerns raised in connection to the video I consulted for the writing of this section on “Sennen no Kamoku,” I will not be included video examples for this piece as I have for others in this dissertation.

²²⁹ In a personal communication, Hayashi notes that this section also includes the singing of a folk song entitled “Hohai Bushi,” from the Tsugaru region of Aomori prefecture. Indeed, recent performances of “Sennen no Kamoku” feature Hayashi singing while whirling a rope similar to an Australian bullroarer.

2. A section featuring the taiko set
3. A section featuring a collection of wooden and bamboo instruments
4. A section featuring the *ō-daiko*

The first section of “Sennen no Kamoku” features the use of an *uchiwa-daiko*, a round, fan-shaped single-headed drum traditionally used in Nichiren Buddhism prayer practices, consisting of a drumhead sewn onto a ring attached to a wooden handle (Asano Foundation for Taiko Culture Research 2002, 23). As he holds the *uchiwa-daiko*, Hayashi walks around the stage (Figure 75). His movements are slow and controlled, similar to that found in Noh (of which he had learned the basics of movement while a member of Ondekoza). This inclusion of Japanese theater movement was something that had been used at times by Ondekoza, but in general had not made its way into *wadaiko* performance. It could be speculated that Hayashi’s inclusion of the movement was one expression of Japanese spirituality within his music, as Noh has been described as “a kind of symbolic drama colored with the graceful aesthetic effect of quiet elegance that is expressed through the word *yugen* (‘elegant, refined, and elusive beauty’).”²³⁰

However, early videos do not feature this singing – at the very least, it is not present in a 1986 performance of the piece, one of the earliest recorded performances available. As such, it will not be described in this chapter.

²³⁰ From the Japan Arts Council webpage about Noh.

<http://www2.ntj.jac.go.jp/unesco/noh/en/nohgaku.html> (accessed March 5, 2013)



Figure 75. Hayashi Eitetsu holding an *uchiwa-daiko*

Screenshot from a DVD of a 2000 performance in Berlin (Hayashi 2000)

The rhythms in this opening section are sparse and repetitive. When not completely improvised, the music often includes a short repeated phrase, with the space between each note lengthened or shortened to varying degrees (Figure 76).

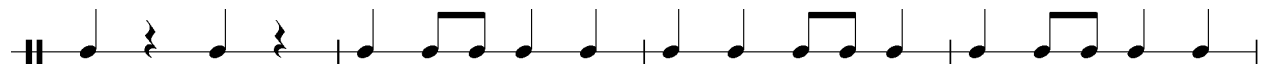


Figure 76. A phrase, often repeated, played in the opening *uchiwa-daiko* section of "Sennen no Kamoku"

The emphasis in this opening section of "Sennen no Kamoku" is placed as much on the movement as on the drumming. This focus on movement was not that unusual for *wadaiko* – see, for example, Sukeroku Taiko's "Yodan Uchi" (Chapter 3.5) – but such choreography was typically fast and frantic. Hayashi's movement, by contrast, is slow and controlled, with the drumming meant to further accentuate the movement. In early performances of "Sennen no Kamoku," he also had the stage lights dimmed during this opening section, so that only the

outline of his figure could be seen. This experimentation with stage lighting was another thing he brought from Ondekoza, as they had used spotlights and reducing lighting during performance of “Monochrome.”

Hayashi’s movements eventually take him back towards a taiko set containing a number of different types of taiko (Figure 77). Building upon the basic set that Oguchi Daihachi created using a variable amount *nagadō-daiko* and *shime-daiko*, Hayashi’s set also includes several other types of taiko that had been introduced into *wadaiko* performance in the 1970s and 1980s.



Figure 77. Hayashi Eitetsu behind his taiko set.

Calvin Simmons Theater, Oakland, CA, May 11, 1986

Screenshot from video from private library

On Hayashi’s right are several rows of *uchiwa-daiko* (two or three rows, depending on the setup being used for a particular concert), with three drums in each row. In the beginning he used six *uchiwa-daiko* (as seen in the above image), but in recent years he has expanded this number to eight, with only two drums on the bottom row. The largest and thus lowest-pitched

drum is on the top right, while the smallest and highest-pitched drum is on the bottom. This setup, with many *uchiwa-daiko* placed on a single rack, was one of the innovations created by Hayashi when he began experimenting with unique ways of creating sounds using various types of drums (Asano Foundation for Taiko Culture Research 2002, 23).

There is no precedent for such a set up in traditional Japanese music; not only were the *uchiwa-daiko* solely used in Buddhist ritual, but has been discussed elsewhere in this dissertation there had been no grouping of many taiko together in a single set (this was an advancement began by Oguchi Daihachi), let alone organized according to pitch relations.²³¹ In Western art music a similar setup has been used in modern percussion pieces since the mid-20th Century. Further, there is a tradition of racks of tuned gongs in China and Korea. However, it is unclear what influence these non-Japanese practices had on Hayashi's creation of the *uchiwa-daiko* rack.

Placed beside the rack of *uchiwa-daiko* are several *shime-daiko* of varying pitch (typically one high and one medium to low). The rest of the set is completed by multiple *katsugi okedō-daiko*, larger bucket-shaped rope-tied taiko that Hayashi began experimenting with at the end of his time with Ondekoza/Kodo (see Chapter 4.6.2). While the typical performance practice for these drums is to carry them with a strap over one shoulder, before he left Sado for Tokyo Hayashi began experimenting with different ways of placing them on stands. Upon embarking on his solo career, Hayashi worked with the Asano Taiko drum manufacturing company to further

²³¹ A small combination of two drums is used in some folk performance traditions, such as the *Edo Kotobuki Jishi* discussed at the beginning of Chapter 1. However, it does not approach the scale of the *wadaiko* taiko set, and should not be considered as such.

develop a version of the drum that could be used for stage performance as a part of a taiko set.²³² These drums are arranged with the higher-pitched *shime-daiko* on Hayashi's right and lower-sounding *katsugi okedō-daiko* on his left; thus, when playing from his right to his left a descending scale of sorts is produced. Of course, these drums are not tuned, but there is a clear difference in from high to low frequency, giving it the appearance of a scale.

Further rounding out the set is a small set of other percussion instruments, including an *atarigane* (handheld gong) and a wood block (a slit drum made from a single piece of wood). In recent years, he has expanded the setup to include larger flat gongs and oversized *atarigane*, both hanging on metal stands, as well as an additional drum – typically a small *hiradō-daiko* (see Chapter 4.6.2) – hanging in back of the taiko set in a manner similar to an *ō-daiko* (Figure 78).

²³² Indeed, Asano Taiko calls this version of the drum – that is, one designed to be placed on a stand – the Eitetsu-model *katsugi-okedō*. <http://www.asano.jp/taiko/eitetsu/> (accessed October 8, 2012).

Kodo uses this stand in several of their pieces, including “Chonlima,” composed by Tosha Roetsu and mentioned in Chapter 4.6.2 (a legacy of Hayashi's time with the group before embarking on his solo career).



Figure 78. Another view of Hayashi's taiko set, including the various non-drum instruments he uses.

On the left are several *atarigane* of various sizes and a wood block, while on the right is a flat gong and the edge of an oversized *atarigane*. The *hiradō-daiko* hanging on the stand behind the set is a more recent addition to the set.

Screenshot from a 2000 DVD (Hayashi 2000).

The specifics of Hayashi's taiko set are worth noting, as the set's makeup was at the time something previously unseen in the *wadaiko* world. It is arranged so that when Hayashi moves from one side of the set to the other (right to left), the sounds descend in pitch from high to low, allowing him to create patterns in rhythmic phrases that are melodic in nature. It is a concept long used within Western art music percussion performance, with sets of different instruments combined in a manner so that pieces have both rhythmic and quasi-melodic content, but was a first in the world of *wadaiko* performance.

According to Hayashi, the second section of "Sennen no Kamoku" was written "as a piece for a single performer on a taiko set" (personal communication, December 2012). Moving in between the *uchiwa-daiko*, *shime-daiko*, and *katsugi okedō-daiko*, he combines high, medium, and low sounds in a quasi-melodic fashion. Transitioning from the use of a single *uchiwa-daiko*

in the opening section of the piece, this second section begins with a series of phrases on the *uchiwa-daiko* rack (an excerpt of which can be seen in Figure 79). The emphasis on the melodic possibilities allowed by this setup of drums, as performed by a single person, is another evolution in *wadaiko* performance. While Oguchi Daihachi had highlighted the contrasting sounds of the drums in his taiko set, there was not a standard instrumentation created for melodic purposes. Hayashi's set allows him to create drum phrases that have melodic as well as rhythmic qualities. Additionally, the use of felt mallets rather than wooden drumsticks creates a softer timbre with less of an attack, a different type of sound in a *wadaiko* performance.



Figure 79. Opening *uchiwa-daiko* rack pattern in "Sennen no Kamoku"

Each space on the staff represents a different pitched drum, ranging from low to high.

Hayashi eventually moves from the *uchiwa-daiko* rack to the rest of the drums on the taiko set. The interplay between *shime-daiko* and *katsugi okedō-daiko* is more rhythmic than melodic in nature, but nevertheless the difference in pitches is emphasized in a long improvisational series. At the same time, Hayashi began experimenting with more complex rhythmic sequences, utilizing complex duple and triple combinations (Figure 80)



Figure 80. A series from the second part of "Sennen no Kamoku"

Each space on the staff represents a different-pitched drum. The middle space represents the higher of the three *katsugi okedō-daiko*; one space above that, the lower *shime-daiko*, while the bottom space on the staff represents the middle *katsugi okedō-daiko*.

In exploring the potentials of solo improvisation on a taiko set, Hayashi was not only experimenting with sounds but also with musical content. With perhaps the exception of “Monochrome,” *wadaiko* music to that point was fairly basic in rhythmic structure, largely holding to a 4-beat measure (in Western terms, 4/4, 12/8, etc.). This was perhaps out of necessity, as more complex rhythms are harder to play amongst a large ensemble with big drums that would muddle the sound. As a soloist, however, Hayashi was free to explore a wider range of rhythmic possibilities, opening a new dimension of rhythm for *wadaiko* performance.

The middle of the second section features an interlude with interplay between the *uchiwa-daiko*, *atarigane*, and wood block, during which time he switches to wooden drum sticks. Following a louder improvisational passage on the *uchiwa-daiko* rack, having more in common with the earlier interplay between the *shime-daiko* and *katsugi-okedō daiko* that which the beginning of the section, Hayashi then starts moving across the entire set, using the full range of pitches and drums available to him.

Following a fast and loud conclusion to the second section of the piece, the third section of “Sennen no Kamoku” features spare hits on the wood block and other wooden parts of the taiko set. Finally, Hayashi moves away from his taiko set and to a large *ō-daiko*, signaling the beginning of the final section of the piece. “Sennen no Kamoku” concludes with an extended *ō-daiko* improvisation much in the fashion of his independent solos.²³³ Employing sounds produced when hitting on the various parts of the head, he contrasts the thin, short sound of the edge of the drum with the deep, full sound of the center, all the while playing a fast driving rhythm.

With “Sennen no Kamoku,” Hayashi was searching for a path towards the creation of a different style of performance not just for himself but also for *wadaiko* as a broader musical genre. In becoming a solo artist he was free to explore the boundaries of what could be done with various taiko in a set. He sought a performance style that represented “a high-minded, noble aspect of the Japanese,” but he also wanted it “to be progressive and highly contemporary”

²³³ A note about terminology: the use of the word ‘solo’ in this instance means a piece for a single performer. See David Fuller, “Solo,” in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. (Oxford University Press, 2013). It is also used in reference to an extended improvisation by an individual, the manner in which it has been used in many of the discussions to this point.

(Hayashi 2011). Within a modern musical genre that was still relatively young and finding its way, Hayashi was searching for his own performance style and mode of expression.

However, Hayashi was not the only one making such exploratory efforts. Indeed, during the 1980s he occasionally collaborated with Kenny Endo, an artist who drew from a wide variety of musical influences to develop a style of *wadaiko* performance much different from that developed by Hayashi. Just as Hayashi came out of Ondekoza, Kenny Endo was trained in the Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku styles of performance, experience that was enhanced by the study of *hōgaku* and festival music of Tokyo; these skills were also combined with talents honed as a jazz drummer in clubs, creating a unique style of solo *wadaiko* performance. Coming to Japan in 1980 from California, Endo emerged as a major player not only in the advancement of solo *wadaiko* performance but also in the further development of *wadaiko* as an intercultural musical genre.

6.2 KENNY ENDO

Born in Los Angeles in 1953, Kenny Endo grew up playing Western percussion; beginning with snare drum in elementary school band, he moved on to drum set while also playing in school bands through middle school and high school (Endo 2011). Endo's exposure to Japanese culture was limited to events like *bon odori* held during the Japanese culture festival Nisei Week in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles; at the very least, he had no knowledge of *wadaiko* as he grew up, as the art form did not make its way across the ocean until the late 1960s (as discussed in Chapter 5).

Endo first encountered *wadaiko* in 1973, when he saw a performance by the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai at an event in San Jose. He found himself “overwhelmed by an exciting show unlike other performances of Japanese traditional arts [he] had previously been exposed to” (Endo 1999, 5). In 1975, he joined Kinnara Taiko in Los Angeles while finishing his studies at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), where he majored in political science and minored in ethnomusicology (Endo 2011). Additionally, he spent the summer of 1975 learning from Tanaka Seiichi in San Francisco (Endo 1998). Upon graduating from UCLA in 1976, Endo moved to San Francisco to continue his studies with Tanaka. He played with the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai for four years while also working as a drummer at a club in the city.

Through Tanaka, Endo came to know about Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko, and was being able to see both groups in performance when they came to California. He also was introduced to various traditional performance arts from Japan during the 1970s, part of a series of events he calls his “three meetings with *wadaiko*” (Endo 2011). The first ‘meeting’ was his encounter with the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai in San Jose in 1973. The second, meanwhile, occurred in 1976 when Endo witnessed a performance of the Awa Odori from Tokushima, Japan when members of a dance troupe from the city came to Los Angeles for a special festival; he was so struck by the music that he “kept following after the procession and listening” (Endo 2011). The third meeting came when he had the opportunity to see a performance in Los Angeles of the kabuki play “Renjishi;” again, he was struck by this performance from Japan that was so different from the music he was playing with the San Francisco Taiko Dojo.

Eventually, Endo found he was becoming more and more engrossed in *wadaiko* performance. At the same time, however, he was beginning to have questions about some of the

discourses that had been arising in relation to *wadaiko* performance in the United States. As noted in the previous chapter, *wadaiko* in the United States had from early in its history a strong connection with not just the Japanese-American community but also the larger Asian-American community. Emerging at a time where there was a rise of “nascent Asian American political consciousness and an emphasis on ethnic solidarity,” performance arts like *wadaiko* came to be seen as a way for young people to express their sense of ethnic identity (Yoon 2001, 422). In time, this became linked to the rise of what was being called “Asian-American music,” later defined by Joseph Lam as “the musics of Asian Americans who incorporate Asian and American elements in their musical works” (Lam 1999, 34). However, Endo found that he was unsettled by the use of this term:

They would say, “well, this band’s gonna play Asian American music.” And I would go see them, and they would be playing basically soul music, or funk, or jazz. It didn’t have an element of ‘Asian-ness’ to it, other than the fact that culturally the performers were Japanese-American, Chinese American, Filipino-American. I was always wondering, “Well, where is the Asian part of this Asian-American music?” (Personal interview, June 29, 2010)

Combining a desire to study *wadaiko* more intensely and a drive to “go to Japan and really seek out where the roots are, and what kind of music it came from,” Endo decided in 1980 to travel to Japan to begin further studies of *wadaiko* (personal interview, June 29, 2010). With Tanaka’s recommendation and introduction, he first travelled to Nagano Prefecture to study with Oguchi Daihachi and Osuwa Daiko. Then, in 1981, he moved to Tokyo; again based on Tanaka’s recommendations, he began studying under members of Sukeroku Taiko. He became a member

of Sukeroku Taiko, and later followed Kobayashi Seido to join Oedo Sukeroku Taiko when the groups split in 1982 (as discussed in Chapter 3.6.1) (Endo 1999, 7).

However, even as Endo was enveloped in the Sukeroku style of *wadaiko* performance, he also began to explore other Japanese musical traditions, the roots of *wadaiko* that had driven him to Japan in the first place. Through Tanaka's introduction he met Mochizuki Saburo, the co-founder of Sukeroku Taiko who by that time was performing full-time as a *hōgaku* musician (see Chapter 3.6.1). Endo entered into the Mochizuki school of *hōgaku-hayashi*, the music of Noh and kabuki theater, studying first with Mochizuki Saburo and then with Mochizuki Tazaemon (who in 1988 became the fourth head of the Mochizuki school and succeeded into the name Mochizuki Bokusei) (Endo 2011). Endo devoted himself to both his Sukeroku activities and his *hōgaku* studies, and in 1987 was the first non-Japanese to receive a *natori* (professional stage name) in *hōgaku-hayashi* (Endo 1999, 7). Thereafter, he became known within the *hōgaku* world as Mochizuki Tajiro.²³⁴ He performed several times at the Kabuki-za, the primary venue for kabuki performance in Tokyo, both onstage and in the *kuromisu* (the offstage room housing several musicians, discussed in Chapter 3.4.2); he was even given the opportunity to play taiko for "Renjishi," the kabuki play that inspired him to travel to Japan, when his teacher succeeded into the head of the Mochizuki school in 1988 (Endo 2011).

In addition to his *hōgaku* studies, Endo also learned some of the folk performance arts of Tokyo, particularly those of the *Shitamachi* area (which had influenced the development of the Sukeroku style – see Chapter 3.4). Thanks to Mochizuki Saburo's recommendation, he was able to begin studying *Oedo sato-kagura*, Shinto theatrical music and dance from the Tokyo *Shitamachi* area. This led to entrance into the Wakayama Shachū performance troupe; in addition

²³⁴ <http://www.kennyendo.com/about> (accessed October 9, 2012)

to learning *kagura* and festival music styles native to Tokyo (including the *Edo-bayashi* style that had influenced Sukeroku Taiko – see Chapter 3.4.1), he also learned *Edo Kotobuki Jishi*, a version of the lion dance native to the *Shitamachi* area.

These experiences gave Endo expansive experience in traditional and contemporary drumming practices in Japan, spanning folk, theatrical, and contemporary *wadaiko* music. This course of action had much in common with founding members of Sukeroku Taiko like Tosha Kiyonari and Mochizuki Saburo, whose exposure to *hōgaku* in the early days of the group led them to pursue more serious study of that classical genre (see Chapter 3.6). However, where those members decided to devote themselves entirely to *hōgaku*, Endo chose to pursue both *hōgaku* and *wadaiko* performance; combined with his exposure to Tokyo *Shitamachi* festival music, he gained a degree of performance knowledge hereto unseen in the *wadaiko* world. While members of Ondekoza had studied various regional folk drumming, they had not done so to the degree that Endo did over the course of his time in Tokyo; further, while some members of Sukeroku Taiko had studied *hōgaku*, they had eventually left *wadaiko* to do so, not pursuing both as Endo had decided.

Drawing upon this experience, and inspired partially by the activities of Hayashi Eitetsu, Endo decided in 1987 to become a freelance performer (Endo 1999, 7).²³⁵ However, even before he officially went solo he began to compose works for solo and small group performance,

²³⁵ Hayashi notes that he had worked with Endo several times beginning in the early 1980s: first as “a performer who I requested to work for me as a support member numerous times after I became a soloist in 1982,” and later as a fellow soloist in concert with whom Hayashi engaged in several collaborative projects (such as the concert discussed at the beginning of this chapter). (personal communication, December 2012)

drawing upon his wide amount of knowledge to explore a different set of possibilities for *wadaiko* performance than that offered by Hayashi.

6.2.1 “Ancient Beginnings”

One of the first pieces that Endo composed while in Japan was “Ancient Beginnings.”²³⁶ Written in 1984 when Endo participated as guest performer for the Kotosono Dance Ensemble’s tour of Egypt, it is a duet for taiko set and wind instrument. “Ancient Beginnings” is one of many of works by Endo written for taiko set. When he composed the work, his set consisted of a *nagadō-daiko*, a *hiradō-daiko* (much smaller than the type used by Kodo, and closer to the size used by Hayashi Eitetsu), a smaller *byō-uchi-daiko* known as a *sumō-daiko* (because it is used in *sumo* matches), and a *shime-daiko*; these drums were positioned from largest to smallest from Endo’s right to his left (Figure 81). The taiko were accompanied by a set of cymbals and gongs positioned behind Endo, as well as a *mokugyo*, a round woodblock-like instrument traditionally used in Buddhist music (Malm 2000, 72).²³⁷

²³⁶ Due to permission concerns raised in relation to the video I consulted while writing this section about “Ancient Beginnings,” I will not be including video clips as I have for other works in this dissertation.

²³⁷ Endo has adapted his taiko set over time, now typically using just a single *shime-daiko*, one *sumō-daiko*, and one *nagadō-daiko*, creating a simple high-middle-low pitch relationship.



Figure 81. Kenny Endo performing "Ancient Beginnings."

Calvin Simmons Theater, Oakland, CA, May 11, 1986

Screenshot of video from private library

“Ancient Beginnings” consists of four sections, meant as a whole to symbolize the development of civilization:

Images of the desert, vast space, and the origins of civilization precede the melodic theme representing the organization of human life. A solo section depicts our modern and bustling society. In the end, the melodic theme returns with a rhythmic accompaniment in double time. (Endo 1994)

The piece opens with an introductory section in which Endo plays sporadically on the various instruments that surround him while the wind player sounds long tones that weave in between tonality and microtonality. This is followed by the introduction of a melodic theme – representing “the organization of human life – by the wind player as Endo plays a groove on the taiko set using the various sounds of the drums (an excerpt from the melody can be seen in

Figure 82). One or two drums are used in the main rhythm, with the other drums used in additional flourishes. It is akin to the basic groove played on the cymbal, bass drum, and snare drum of a drum set, with the tom toms being used to augment the rhythmic foundation; a groove, a term often used in relation to drum set or percussion playing, is generally defined as “a persistently repeated pattern” (Kernfeld 2002).



Figure 82. An Excerpt from the melody of "Ancient Beginnings"

Transcription written at actual pitch

The groove-based approach to taiko set taken by Endo was different from Hayashi's approach to the collection of instruments. Hayashi's style was more melodic in nature, bringing together different drums organized from high to low pitch (accented by different wooden and metallic instruments). That is not to say that Endo does not make use of the various pitches in his taiko set, but the rhythm is the focus in his playing rather than Hayashi's melodic focus reflected in music like the opening *uchiwa-daiko* rack part of the second section of "Sennen no Kamoku." Of course, this may have to do with the fact that Endo is playing along with a melodic

instrument in “Ancient Beginnings.” Indeed, the majority of pieces Endo writes for taiko set also include a melodic instrument, which perhaps dictates how he uses the collection of drums.

In some respects, Endo’s use of the taiko set to produce a particular groove is similar in to the approach taken by Oguchi Daihachi, owing perhaps to their common professional drum set background. However, the differences in their musical experiences are reflected in the types of groove patterns they utilize. Oguchi’s rhythms were very swing band-influenced, not that different from what might hear in a Benny Goodman performance of “Sing Sing Sing”: triplet patterns that alternate between on- and off-beat rhythms. Endo’s grooves, on the other hand, have more rhythmic variety, owing perhaps to the Latin and funk music that he grew up listening to which was also popular during the time he worked as a club drummer (see, for example, the pattern in Figure 83).



Figure 83. Excerpt from the taiko set accompaniment for "Ancient Beginnings"

Notes placed on spaces according to their relative pitch, not to the location of the drum in the set

At the same time, Endo demonstrates a level of security with letting the groove settle for a time before adding fills (seen in the second half of the above transcription), seemingly comfortable serving as accompaniment to a melodic instrument; Oguchi, meanwhile, treated the

majority of his taiko set pieces like an extended solo, and rarely held a groove for very long. Of course, Oguchi rarely played duets with melodic instruments, and when he was behind his taiko set he was either the soloist or in a duet with another drummer; as such, he and Endo represent two different approaches to the taiko set drawing from their drum set experiences.

As “Ancient Beginnings” moves out of the melody and into an extended solo section, both Endo and the wind player are given equal moments to shine. Endo’s solos continue to draw from his drum set background, as melodic-sounding solos that utilize the various pitches of the drums are occasionally interspersed with patterns more fundamentally rhythmic, utilizing both the heads and rims of the drums to create a combination of on- and off the beat sounds (such as that transcribed in Figure 84).

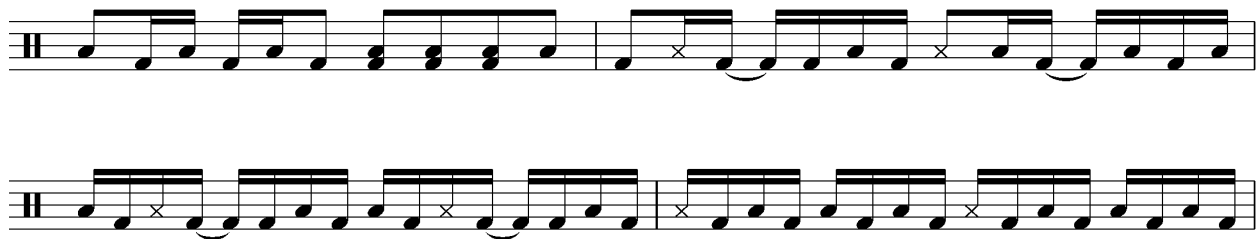


Figure 84. An example of a groove used in Endo’s solos during "Ancient Beginnings"

After several minutes of Endo improvising alone, the wind player enters, with the majority of the solo section consisting of the two improvising simultaneously; sometimes they play music with no relation to each other, while at other times the performers use visual and musical cues to indicate shifts in tempo or rhythm. Endo cues a return to the melody section by holding a repeating groove that slows down slightly. The final presentation of the melody is faster than its original declaration, yet not as fast as the solo duet. As it winds down, the performers reduce their volume, dropping to almost nothingness as the piece ends.

“Ancient Beginnings” sounds at times like jazz, only played with a taiko set instead of a Western drum set; indeed, with its saxophone melody and extended ternary form (intro-melody-solo-melody), “Ancient Beginnings” would not be out of place being performed in a jazz club. This perhaps speaks as much to Endo’s musical background as it does to the evolution of *wadaiko*, for as musicians begin to explore new compositional possibilities the boundaries of genre begin to break down. That is not to say that Endo only drew from his jazz background in his compositions, however. Indeed, as he explored different musical directions in *wadaiko* composition he began to embrace more and more the *hogaku* traditions with which he was engaging on a daily basis. The various musical traditions that influenced Endo were melded together in a piece entitled “Symmetrical Soundscapes,” which has become one of his most well-known compositions.

6.2.2 “Symmetrical Soundscapes”

Where “Ancient Beginnings” is a duet for taiko set and wind player, “Symmetrical Soundscapes” – composed in 1985 – began as a duet “for two taiko players performing mirror imagery through sounds” (Endo 1994). Instrumentation varies according to the drums at hand; a performance on August 28, 1988 at Stella Studio in Tokyo, for example, took place with each player using simply a single *shime-daiko*, while other performances have featured more lavish setups, including a *uchiwa-daiko* rack, several *shime-daiko* of different pitch, and *byō-uchi-daiko* of different sizes (such as that seen in Figure 85). Meanwhile, the piece has often been expanded

from a duet into a quartet or even larger; in such instances, the main framework of the piece remains the same and only the part assignments change.²³⁸



Figure 85. Kenny Endo performing "Symmetrical Soundscapes"

At Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA, March 30, 1995

Screenshot of video from private library

“Symmetrical Soundscapes” is divided into two parts, both featuring a combination of composed rhythmic sequences and extended improvisations. A typical performance opens with the players hitting a single *uchiwa-daiko* held in their hands, with sparse hits that start slow and

²³⁸ A video of “Symmetrical Soundscapes” has been uploaded by Kenny Endo to his YouTube channel, and can be seen at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWv_tht114I (accessed January 1, 2013).

Taken from Endo’s 35th Anniversary concert in Los Angeles in 2010, it features Endo, three members of the group On Ensemble, and *wadaiko* soloist Kaoru Watanabe in a rare five-person version of the piece. Given that the music of “Symmetrical Soundscapes” is the same regardless of the amount of players (the only thing that changes is the amount of solos), the transcriptions and discussions in this chapter still apply.

gradually get faster and closer together. As the drummers play, they move around the stage, taking advantage of the freedom of movement permitted by a handheld *uchiwa-daiko* (much like the opening of Hayashi's "Sennen no Kamoku").

Eventually, the first of a series of rhythms is introduced consisting of interlocking patterns played between the drummers. Setting the tone for much of the piece, these rhythms are largely borrowed from *hōgaku*; indeed, the first rhythm to be performed is a direct quotation of a rhythm used in *nagauta* (a song form featured in kabuki). In *hōgaku*, this rhythm is divided between the *ko-tsuzumi* and the *ō-tsuzumi*; in "Symmetrical Soundscapes," meanwhile, it is divided between the different players (Figure 86, with the first player – A, on the top line – playing the equivalent *ko-tsuzumi* part, and the second player – B, on the bottom – the *ō-tsuzumi* part; 02:47 in the YouTube video). In some performances, these rhythms are played straight in time, while in others there is great flexibility to the beat; in either instance, however, the combination of high and low sounds and difference between long and short notes allows the rhythm to clearly stand out.



Figure 86. Opening rhythms of "Symmetrical Soundscapes"

Variations of these interlocking rhythms are followed by a series of solos, described by Endo as "solos intertwined with images of mountains and valleys" (Endo 1994). A repeated sixteenth-note ostinato is divided between the two players, with dynamics rising from soft to

loud and back down to soft; individual solos begin again after one repeat of this ostinato, with one player accompanying the solo with the ostinato while following the same dynamic contour (Figure 87; 04:50 in the YouTube video).²³⁹



Figure 87. The 'mountain' ostinato of "Symmetrical Soundscapes"

After both players have played an extended solo over the 'mountain' accompanying ostinato, they briefly pause, and then enter into the second part of the piece. While the first part of "Symmetrical Soundscapes" features interlocking parts largely derived from *hōgaku*, the second takes its inspiration from both Brazilian music and *Edo-bayashi*. A series of fast, unison rhythms open the section, providing a completely different rhythmic sound that what had come before (Figure 88; 06:26 in the YouTube video).²⁴⁰

²³⁹ In versions of this piece performed by more than two people, this pattern continues to be split between pairs of performers as others improvise, as seen in the YouTube clip.

²⁴⁰ Following the model in the original handwritten score for "Symmetrical Soundscapes," the transcription in this excerpt indicates the different sounds that are to be played in this section – high, medium, and low. This is different from the other transcriptions for this piece, which indicate differences between player assignments but not pitch. This beginning of the second half of the piece is the only part in which pitch distinctions are important to the understanding of the piece, and are always followed by musicians in performance.

The original score has this section divided by player and not by pitch (both playing the middle notes, player A the high, and player B the low). However, based on a survey of performances of the piece from 1988 through



Figure 88. Opening phrase for the second part of "Symmetrical Soundscapes"

Drawing from *Edo-bayashi* technique, the first two measures are primarily played on the *shime-daiko* with quiet, nearly unheard notes filling in the space between the primary notes. The second repeated pattern is divided between high and low-pitched drums that mimic the sound of a samba drum ensemble. This is repeated, and then after a series of measures relying heavily on off-beat rhythms, a pattern taken from *Edo-bayashi* signals the beginning into another series of solos (Figure 89).



Figure 89. Rhythm from *Edo-bayashi* that leads into the solo section of "Symmetrical Soundscapes"

Unlike the rather open solos from the first half of the piece, the second half features strictly timed solos: the players trade one four-bar solo each, then two series of two-bar solos, then four series of one-bar solos. The Latin influence then returns after the solos, as a unison 3-2 *son clave* (a rhythm at the core of many Afro-Cuban musical forms) is followed by three measures of player A playing a 2-3 *son clave* while player B continues the 3-2 (Figure 90; 07:53

2012, it appears that this practice has not been followed since the late 1980s. In modern performances of "Symmetrical" (duet and larger), all musicians play the rhythm, dividing it between high and low pitches.

in the YouTube video). The terms 3-2 and 2-3 refer to the grouping of the notes: a group of 3 then 2, or a group of 2 then 3.

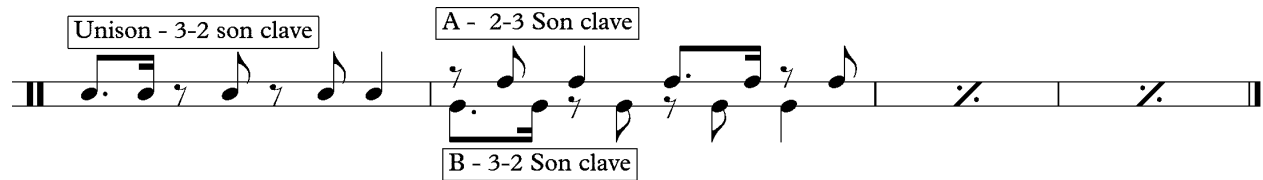


Figure 90. 3-2 and 2-3 Son clave in "Symmetrical Soundscapes"

This immediately transitions into another series of rhythms derived from *kabuki-hayashi*; more specifically, they are taken from “Chakuto,” “a short taiko piece accompanied by a Japanese vertical flute traditionally played to open the curtain.”²⁴¹ A rhythm called the *shagiri* is first played in unison, followed by another known as the *age* (Figure 91; 07:58 in the YouTube clip). A series of largely off-the-beat rhythms follow, again divided between the players, before the piece ends with a strong unison hit.

²⁴¹ <http://www.jpff.go.jp/e/culture/new/1202/02-01-2.html> (Accessed October 15, 2012)



Figure 91. Rhythms from "Chakuto," as presented in "Symmetrical Soundscapes," through the end of the piece

"Symmetrical Soundscapes" stands apart from *wadaiko* music that had come prior to it in several ways. It was in its first incarnation a duet, a rarity in a *wadaiko* world characterized by works for large ensembles or, with the advent of soloists, individuals (even Hayashi Eitetsu rarely wrote duets). Further, it quotes directly from *hōgaku-hayashi* on a large scale. Certainly Sukeroku Taiko drew inspiration from *hōgaku* in some of their pieces – most prominently, "Oroshi Daiko" and "Shiraume Daiko" (see Chapter 3.4.3) – but the degree of quotation found in "Symmetrical Soundscapes" is unique. Of course, this owes much to Endo's own experience in *hōgaku*.

Meanwhile, the second half of "Symmetrical Soundscapes" is distinctive in that it draws heavily from non-Japanese rhythms; the presence of Samba and Afro-Cuban rhythms lends a different sound to the piece. Again, this is due to Endo's own experience, this time drawing upon his drum set background. While not the first time that non-Japanese rhythms had been integrated

into a *wadaiko* piece, it was perhaps the first time that they were so obviously stated; the combination of rhythms and high and low-pitched taiko in the beginning of the section, for example, clearly evokes a Brazilian samba.

Further, in another instance of Endo drawing from his own experiences, the intricate rhythms used in the second section and techniques used to play them are taken from *Edo-bayashi*. In this regard, “Symmetrical Soundscapes” has some common elements with compositions performed by Sukeroku Taiko and its successors, which Endo was performing at this time as a member of Oedo Sukeroku Taiko. At the same time, Endo was also learning *Edo-bayashi* as a member of the Wakayama Shachū performance troupe, so he was drawing upon first-hand experience with the performance tradition.

“Symmetrical Soundscapes” is a reflection of Endo himself, combining the varied musical experiences that he has accumulated into what early on was called “a new and refreshing sound combining his Eastern and Western backgrounds” (Kageyama 1986). Works that would follow would continue to evolve as Endo himself evolved; one such example is “Moonwind,” an understated *ō-daiko* solo – contrary to the typical loud, forceful solo – that utilizes not only rhythms taken from kabuki music but also different drums of drumsticks used during kabuki performances (mentioned at the beginning of this dissertation). As a whole, the compositions created by Endo not only represent a step forward for *wadaiko* repertoire but also reflect the potential for musical growth offered by *wadaiko* solo performance.

6.3 SOLOISTS AND THE EVOLUTION OF WADAIKO MUSIC

By the mid-1980s, Endo and Hayashi were not only working separately as solo *wadaiko* artists but also occasionally collaborating on projects, such as the 1986 tour described at the beginning of this chapter. When talking about their work at the time, Endo said: “We want to break down musical boundaries and bring taiko drumming out of a purely traditional framework” (Kageyama 1986). When he speaks of this “traditional framework,” Endo is not only talking about the accompanying role taiko long had in *hōgaku*, *matsuri-bayashi*, and other performance traditions, but also the ensemble-based *wadaiko* musical genre that by that time was in its third decade of existence. For the first part of its history, *wadaiko* was an ensemble genre. In the 1970s, a yearly concert series began started at the National Theater of Japan entitled “Nihon no Taiko”, featuring performances of local drumming traditions – and, increasingly, *wadaiko* – by groups from across Japan. Hayashi has participated in this concert several times – the first time being in 1984 – but never as a soloist. Instead, he has also performed in collaboration with other artists or as part of a larger group. When Hayashi and Endo began to work as soloists, then, they not only were exploring new musical possibilities but also challenging the predominant association of *wadaiko* with the group performance format. In this case, tradition was not necessarily a chronological concept – that is, something that been played for generations – but based on the predominant form of presentation.

To some degree, Hayashi and Endo’s creative activities were forced by their situation. Working as soloists, they were required to create new musical ideas that lay outside the boundaries of what had constituted *wadaiko* to that point. Until the emergence as soloists in the 1980s, *wadaiko* was an ensemble-based musical genre in which compositions either followed the Oguchi model – that is, the high-medium-low divide influenced by jazz and orchestral

orchestration – or an extended version of *matsuri-bayashi* orchestration and instrument use, as seen in many Sukeroku Taiko and Ondekoza pieces.²⁴² Further, while there was the occasional highlighting of soloists – such as in Sukeroku Taiko’s “Midare Uchi” and the Ondekoza *ō-daiko* solo – these were exceptions to the rule; they were ensemble pieces that featured individuals rather than works created especially for individual performance. In creating works to perform as solo artists, Hayashi and Endo were forced to explore other forms of expression. The taiko set emerged as a means of performance for soloists partially because of the flexibility it offered the artist, both in terms of instrumentation – an amorphous grouping of drums and instruments that could be adapted to whatever was on hand – and musical context. With different sounds and pitch levels, the artist could think not just rhythmically but to some extent melodically as well.

Performing as a soloist also offered new opportunities that would not be open to a group, because of space considerations if nothing else; art galleries and small venues like jazz clubs and recital halls became new sites for the performance of *wadaiko*. At the same time, Hayashi and Endo took advantage of the wide variety of performance settings to engage in collaborations with other artists; indeed, their activities during the 1980s were driven as much by collaborative efforts as by their solo initiatives. Hayashi was for a time member of the fusion band Ryūdōgumi, while Endo routinely worked with jazz artists as well as with performers of traditional Japanese instruments.

In 1990, Kenny Endo moved back to the United States after 10 years in Japan, having been offered a scholarship to study ethnomusicology at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (as well as teach classes on *wadaiko*). Upon returning to the United States and settling in Honolulu,

²⁴² Ishii’s “Monochrome” remained the exception rather than was treated as a herald of new possibilities for *wadaiko* music.

HI, he continued to work as a soloist; in addition, he established the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble. With a rotating roster including players on both sides of the Pacific, this ensemble provides another creative outlet for Endo, allowing him to compose pieces for a wide variety of instrumentations and ensemble sizes.²⁴³ Additionally, he and his wife Chizuko founded the Taiko Center of the Pacific in 1994, the first school of *wadaiko* in the United States since Tanaka began teaching classes at the San Francisco Taiko Dojo in the late 1960s.²⁴⁴ Through classes for adult and children alike, Endo introduces students to the Sukeroku style of *wadaiko* performance, which he has continued to utilize even after his departure from Oedo Sukeroku Taiko. He also introduces aspects of *Edo-bayashi* and *hōgaku* in class, providing students with exposure to various elements of Japanese music.

Endo's move to Hawaii and the establishment of the Taiko Center of the Pacific represented another step forward in the intercultural nature of *wadaiko*. While the Sukeroku style of performance had been used in the United States since the late 1960s – thanks to the efforts of Tanaka Seiichi and the San Francisco Taiko Dojo – the style Tanaka taught was a bit of a hybrid, combining Osuwa Daiko-style techniques with Sukeroku style and Tanaka's own unique variations that drew from his martial arts experience. Endo, meanwhile, performs and teaches the style as it is played by Oedo Sukeroku Taiko and taught by Sukeroku Taiko founding member Kobayashi Seido.

²⁴³ Beyond “Jugoya,” discussed at the beginning of this dissertation in the introduction of Chapter 1, there are works like “Sunflower” featuring melodic instruments and extended performance techniques on the *ō-daiko*.

A video of “Sunflower” has been uploaded by Endo to his YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IF1lky2vb2M> (accessed February 24, 2013)

²⁴⁴ <http://www.kennyendo.com/taiko-center-of-the-pacific> (accessed March 9, 2013)

Additionally, Endo has been a vital force for establishing connections between groups in Japan and the United States. While in Japan he was a crucial contact for performers in the United States, serving as a middleman for the acquisition of instruments and other supplies from Japanese companies like Tokyo-based Miyamoto Unosuke Shōten. Following his return to the United States, he routinely helped to bring Japanese artists to the country for performances, and has championed the inclusion of these artists in the North American Taiko Conference.²⁴⁵

Hayashi Eitetsu has also continued to expand his creative activities and contribute to the contributed growth of *wadaiko*. Beyond his solo and collaborative activities, in 1995 he established the Eitetsu Fu-un no Kai (“Eitetsu Gathering of the Elements”) ensemble, a group of young artists that function as Hayashi’s apprentices. He realized that “there was a gradually growing number of people who were asking to become my apprentices, so I began accepting them and having them participate in my performances” (Hayashi 2011). At the same time, however, Hayashi is not looking for artists to play exactly like him; as he once put it, “I don’t have any interest in creating Eitetsu clones” (Hayashi 2011). Rather, through this group he seeks to prepare young *wadaiko* artists for futures as soloists.

Indeed, since the emergence of Endo and Hayashi in the 1980s there have been many other artists bursting onto the scene as solo *wadaiko* artists. Some of these soloists followed Endo and Hayashi’s example, working within an established ensemble before breaking off to pursue a solo activity. Kodo has been one of the predominant suppliers of future *wadaiko*

²⁴⁵ Indeed, the presence of Mochizuki Saburo at the 2012 North American Taiko Conference – discussed at the beginning of Chapter 3 – was due to the efforts of Endo, as was a workshop about *Edo Kotobuki Jishi* immediately preceding the conference that was taught by Suzuki Kyosuke, a member of the Wakayama Shachū performance troupe who is also an occasional member of the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble.

soloists, with a number of members eventually deciding to explore their own musical direction.²⁴⁶ Leonard Eto is perhaps the most prominent of these artists, given his past status within Kodo as artistic director. In 1992 he decided to set off on his own, engaging in solo and collaborative activities.²⁴⁷

The explosion in solo artists in the 1990s and beyond is due to the efforts of Hayashi Eitetsu and Kenny Endo in the 1980s. They demonstrated that a solo *wadaiko* artist could function and flourish, embracing different performance opportunities and varied modes of expression. At the same time, they set the stage for another development in *wadaiko*. At the dawn of the 21st Century, a number of groups began to emerge that challenged conventional usages of *wadaiko* in an ensemble setting, offering another form of musical expression that pushes the boundaries of what can be defined as *wadaiko*.

²⁴⁶ The post-split version of Ondekoza has been involved in this process as well; former Ondekoza members that have become soloists include Tateishi Ringtaro, Marco Leinhard, Art Lee, and Tiffany Tamaribuchi.

²⁴⁷ Other Kodo members who have decided to begin life anew as a soloist included Hayashida Hiroyuki, Naito Tetsuro, Kaneko Ryutaro, and Kaoru Watanabe (an American now based in New York).

7.0 GOCOO & ON ENSEMBLE: A NEW GENERATION OF WADAIKO PERFORMERS

By the 1990s, the popularity of Osuwa Daiko, Sukeroku Taiko (and its offshoots), and Ondekoza/Kodo had spurred others in Japan to create their own groups. In 1992, it was reported that there were approximately 3,600 professional, semi-professional, and amateur *wadaiko* groups in Japan (Yagi 1994, 26). While a few of these groups had been around in some form since the 1950s and 1960s, a 1999 Nippon Taiko Foundation survey revealed that a majority had been created in “the ten-year period between 1988 and 1998” (Bender 2012, 110). Meanwhile, in the United States the popularity of the San Francisco Taiko Dojo and San Jose Taiko had a huge impact; over the course of the 1980s, *wadaiko* spread out from its place of origin in California and was embraced by performers across the country. At the same time, traditional bases of *wadaiko* performance in California were seeing even further growth; the number of groups in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area alone had tripled by the 1990s.

This expansion in *wadaiko* activities occurred as interaction between performers in Japan and the United States reached a new level of activity. Following the precedent set by Sukeroku Taiko and the first incarnation of Ondekoza, Japanese groups continued to tour the United States, holding workshops and building relationships with groups across the country; in 1990, Ondekoza began what was dubbed their “US Marathon Tour,” where members “ran a total of 14,910 km

around the outer edges of the United States while performing throughout the country.”²⁴⁸ San Francisco Taiko Dojo’s annual International Taiko Festival – began in the mid-1970s – featured groups and artists from Japan in concert with the San Francisco Taiko Dojo and affiliated groups. At the same time, groups from the United States were giving performances in Japan, building upon San Jose Taiko’s experience touring with Ondekoza in 1987. San Francisco Taiko Dojo, for example, performed in Tokyo in 1994, and in 1995 participated in the Hiroshima 50th Anniversary Commemoration.²⁴⁹

The intercultural flow of *wadaiko* performance was not just limited to *wadaiko* groups, as an increasingly number of individuals from the United States followed the lead of Kenny Endo and Leonard Eto in traveling to Japan. Ondekoza included among its roster in the 1990s a number of performers from the United States; many of these players had been recruited during the group’s early 1990s marathon tour, joining as other members found themselves physically unable to continue with the tour and replacements were needed. Meanwhile, a number of Americans participated in the Kodo apprenticeship program; one, Kaoru Watanabe, became in 2000 the first performer from the United States since Leonard Eto to become a Kodo performing member.²⁵⁰

Kenny Endo’s return to the United States in 1990 and founding of the Taiko Center of the Pacific in Honolulu in 1994 also helped foster these intercultural relationships. Beyond introducing the nation to a slightly different version of the Sukeroku performance style from that spread by Tanaka Seiichi, Endo also helped bring Japanese artists across the Pacific Ocean. In

²⁴⁸ <http://www.ondekoza.com/aboutus.html> (accessed November 26, 2012)

²⁴⁹ http://www.sftaiko.com/about_history.html (accessed November 26, 2012)

²⁵⁰ https://www.fivecolleges.edu/jaid/artists/watanabe_kaoru (accessed March 9, 2013)

the mid-1990s, he helped bring Amanojaku – another Sukeroku Taiko offshoot, founded in 1986 – to the country for a tour of Hawaii and the continental United States. Meanwhile, in 1999 he began the Hawaii International Taiko Festival, which featured Japanese artists alongside his own group, the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble.

7.1 WADAIKO YOUTH MOVEMENT

It was in this era of increased intercultural activities and a burgeoning performance schedule by artists on both sides of the Pacific that there emerged a new generation of performers. The first generation of *wadaiko* performers – members of the groups founded in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s – came to the art form as adults. When their children were born, they sought to provide a *wadaiko* experience for their children, an effort that took several forms. Some *wadaiko* organizations started to operate as mixed performance groups featuring both children and adults. Meanwhile, other groups began to offer classes for children of various ages. San Jose Taiko began its youth program in 1985, the first in the United States.²⁵¹ In time, these led to youth performance groups connected to more established groups and organizations, such as the San Francisco Taiko Dojo Rising Stars and the Taiko Center of the Pacific Youth Group.

Eventually, the children involved in youth groups left for college, prompting the next major development in the *wadaiko* youth movement. Those who went to school in or near a town with a community *wadaiko* group often joined that ensemble. Others, however, took the initiative of creating a *wadaiko* group in their university. In 1990, the first collegiate group in the

²⁵¹ <http://taiko.org/junior-taiko-culture-awareness-group-cooperation/> (accessed November 26, 2012)

United States was founded at UCLA, taking the name Kyodo Taiko; one year later, Stanford Taiko was formed, and the next year Jodaiko at UC Irvine.²⁵²

While these collegiate ensembles often started by playing works brought by members from their old groups, they soon began to compose their own pieces. These compositions were often amalgamations of the various artistic movements making their way through *wadaiko* at the time. One of Stanford Taiko's signature pieces, "Tatsumaki," is an example of this. Composed in 1993 by Hiroshi Tanaka, "Tatsumaki" features an instrumentation and orchestration that follows the model set by Oguchi Daihachi: *nagadō-daiko* playing the melody, with *shime-daiko* and *atarigane* providing the rhythmic foundation.²⁵³ The structure of the piece, meanwhile, follows the ternary form-influenced organizational scheme that emerged in the 1970s and was used by San Jose Taiko and the San Francisco Taiko Dojo, featuring a melody (with introduction), improvisations, and recapitulation of the melody.

At the same time, "Tatsumaki" also features some newer elements brought into *wadaiko* performance in the 1980s. Tanaka added to the standard *wadaiko* ensemble instrumentation an *uchiwa-daiko* rack akin to that used by Hayashi Eitetsu (see Chapter 6.1.1). This grouping of the fan-shaped drums serves several roles over the course of "Tatsumaki": in addition to mirroring

²⁵² <http://kyodo.wordpress.com/history/> (accessed February 23, 2013) According to the group, Kyodo has two meanings: "family," and "loud children."

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/stanfordtaiko/history.html> (accessed February 23, 2013)

<http://www.jodaiko.com/history.php> (accessed February 23, 2013)

Jodaiko was first known as "Tomo no Taiko" ("Taiko of Friends"). The name changed in 1993, with the Chinese character "jō" in the group's name means "feeling" or "sentiment."

²⁵³ A performance of "Tatsumaki" has been uploaded by Stanford Taiko to their YouTube channel. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrF9zdF5TMU> (accessed January 14, 2013)

the rhythmic ostinato played on the *shime-daiko*, it is featured in solos that highlight the combination of various pitches in a quasi-melodic fashion (much as Hayashi does in his music). Meanwhile, the piece utilizes X-shaped stands that place the drums parallel to the ground and at approximately navel height. According to Tanaka, the stands had already been made to play “Miyake,” the arrangement of festival drumming from the island of Miyake made famous by Kodo (see Chapter 4.6.1), as well as an arrangement of festival music from the island of Hachijo arranged by the group Seattle Matsuri Taiko and brought to the group by Stanford Taiko founding member Barden Shimbo (personal communication, February 22, 2013). However, rather than playing on a single drum, the group lined up multiple *nagadō-daiko* in a row so that players could play on multiple drums at the same time (Figure 92).²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴ Tokyo-based group Amanojaku, descended from Sukeroku Taiko, also uses a similar setup in their piece “Bujin.” However, Tanaka states that he had never Amanojaku’s piece before creating “Tatsumaki,” a claim backed up by liner notes from a 2007 DVD by Amanojaku that lists the composition date of “Bujin” as 1994. Amanojaku, *Soul Beat*, (Amanojaku, 2007), DVD, AMAN-1215.



Figure 92. Stanford Taiko performing "Tatsumaki" at the San Jose Obon

San Jose, CA. July 14, 2012.

Photo by Flickr user –Mark–

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/34186459@N00/5929485275/> (accessed November 26, 2012)

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Collegiate groups not only were a way for players who had been playing *wadaiko* since they were young to continue their involvement with the art form, but allowed newcomers to approach the art form as well. Students who did not grow up in communities with *wadaiko* groups found themselves able for the first time to participate in the art form when they got to universities like Stanford; for example, former Stanford Taiko member Kris Bergstrom was inspired to join the group after seeing them perform at new student orientation session (personal interview, November 8, 2011).

Meanwhile, in Japan, similar groups were founded at Japanese universities toward the end of the 1990s, typically under the banner of a club or circle.²⁵⁵ At the same time, however, there were other places for learning *wadaiko*, such as Kodo's apprenticeship program which began in 1981. Performance experience was not needed to Kodo's program, but participants did have to be eighteen years of age.²⁵⁶ As of 2013, there have been over a hundred apprentices that have gone through the apprenticeship.²⁵⁷ Perhaps only ten percent have gone on to become Kodo performing members, but the program has helped to foster a new generation of *wadaiko* artists as many have gone on to form their own groups or pursue careers as soloists.

With this new generation of performers came a wealth of new musical experiences and influences. Many of the individuals who went through Kodo's apprenticeship program and became members, for example, started composing works for the group that had a more complex rhythmic construction than those contributed by their predecessors. "Nanafushi" ("Seven Time"), composed by Naito Tetsuro and featured in the group's 1996 CD *Ibuki*, features complex metrical groups (the equivalent of 7/8 in Western organization), a rarity in a genre dominated by duple or triple meters. Other members would follow Naito's model, including Mitome Tomohiro in his work "Biei" ("Ethereal Flow," featured on Kodo's 1999 album *Warabe*).

²⁵⁵ As explained in promotional materials for one Japanese university, "students sharing the same interest organize themselves into groups called 'circle.'" These interests can include music, art, sports, or any other number of hobbies. http://www.sfc.keio.ac.jp/en/campuslife/student_life.html (accessed January 14, 2013)

²⁵⁶ http://www.kodo.or.jp/apprentice/application_en.html (accessed January 14, 2013)

²⁵⁷ A full list can be found in Kodo's 30th Anniversary publication. Kodo Cultural Foundation, *Inochi Moyashite, Tatakeyo. -Kodo 30-Nen No Kiseki - いのちもやして、たたけよ。 - 鼓童 30年の軌跡一*, 9.

Meanwhile, many other players not affiliated with groups with a long history like Kodo found themselves freer to explore other artistic directions. Often, they looked not just to *wadaiko* groups like Kodo but also to the soloists that had emerged in the 1980s and 1990s: Hayashi Eitetsu, Kenny Endo, Leonard Eto, and others. Beyond embracing the new musical directions these soloists pursued, these younger artists also adopted distinct visual looks. The majority of *wadaiko* ensembles in both Japan and the United States follow a standard pattern for performance wear: coats, pants, and shoes taken from festival wear (such as that worn by Stanford Taiko members in Figure 58). Altering this image evokes a shift from common practice. Early soloists like Kenny Endo and Hayashi Eitetsu utilized this visual shift by wearing costumes more associated with traditional performance arts than with the festival atmosphere embraced by most *wadaiko* groups, a reflection of the influence they took from traditional Japanese arts. Leonard Eto, meanwhile, adopted clothing inspired by the African and Native American drumming whose influence he took in following his departure from Kodo. This practice would continue as new soloists and new groups emerged on the scene.

7.2 GOCOO

One group that embraced this push for a different artistic direction was GOCOO.²⁵⁸ Founded in 1997, the eleven-member ensemble is led by Kaoly Asano. Asano first performed with a number of different *wadaiko* groups after beginning her career in 1991, including one named Wadaiko

²⁵⁸ The group's name is always written in capital Roman characters, regardless of language. It is unclear whether or not it is an acronym, an abbreviation, or something similar.

Tawoo.²⁵⁹ When that group disbanded in 1996, she decided to form a new group with herself as the leader, calling it GOCOO.²⁶⁰ In an indication of the manner in which the group would pursue an alternative approach to *wadaiko* performance, the group debuted at the techno music festival Rainbow 2000 at Mt. Fuji.²⁶¹

Members of GOCOO call their group not a *wadaiko* ensemble but simply a “band,” describing their music as “free-spirited Taiko music, rising freely between the East and the West, tradition and pop, rite and party and hence appealing directly to the heart of a broad range of audiences.”²⁶² Their difference from other *wadaiko* groups is evident from first glance; standard performance wear includes shoulder or mid-riff baring shirts for the women and t-shirts or tank tops for the men, with some of the women wearing long flowing skirts (Figure 93). It is a quite different image from the festival wear-inspired performance dress worn by most *wadaiko* ensembles.

²⁵⁹ Asano’s given name is Asano Kaori, but in the majority of English-language publications – including GOCOO’s own English profile – her name is transliterated as “Kaoly,” and her name written Western style (personal name-family name). I have chosen to follow this precedent in this chapter.

Asano’s presence as GOCOO’s leader is itself another major development in *wadaiko*: the rise of prominence of female performers. This movement began in the mid-1980s, with the creation of the female trio Hono-o-Daiko (<http://www.asano.jp/hono/honoodaiko/>).

While it represents a dramatic shift in the look of the art form, and involves a number of discourses worth investigating, it is beyond the scope of this study.

²⁶⁰ <http://www.mokoneko.com/gocoo.html> (accessed January 14, 2012)

²⁶¹ http://jp.gocoo.tv/?page_id=231 (accessed March 5, 2013)

²⁶² http://www.gocoo.de/wer_e.htm (Accessed November 26, 2012)



Figure 93. GOCOO in performance in Germany in 2009

Photo by Flickr user stinker

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/stinka/3678468013/> (accessed January 12, 2013)

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Meanwhile, the group's music sounds different from that performed by other *wadaiko* groups. Many of their pieces have much in common with 20th Century “house” dance music, a performance style featuring “little more than a repetitive 4/4 rhythm track from a drum machine, built around a relentless bass drum on the beat and a hi-hat cymbal on the off-beats” (Fulford-Jones 2013). GOCOO pieces often feature the cyclical repetition of a few rhythms, the music pushed forward by the repeated presentation of the groove – “a persistently repeated pattern” – as well as small variations on these ostinato-like patterns (Kernfeld 2002). At the same time, most players in the ensemble use a taiko set of various sizes, another legacy of *wadaiko* soloists that began to make its way into more and more *wadaiko* ensemble pieces by the end of the 20th Century. Even though the taiko set - that is, a gathering of taiko into a single grouping arranged so they could be played by a single person (with no specific number or type of drums) – was

introduced by Oguchi Daihachi in the 1950s (discussed in Chapter 2.1.1), until the end of the 20th Century it remained uncommon in group *wadaiko* performance. Leonard Eto incorporated a taiko set in his piece “Zoku” (“Tribe”), written for Kodo in 1989, and drummers each play one *shime-daiko* and one *katsugi okedō-daiko* mounted on a stand in Tosha Roetsu’s “Chonlima” (discussed in Chapter 4.6.2), but these were exceptions. Rather, the taiko set was primarily utilized by *wadaiko* soloists like Hayashi Eitetsu and Kenny Endo (Chapter 6). At the very least, the presence of multiple taiko sets such as those used by GOCOO was a rarity.

A prime example of GOCOO’s performance style is the piece “Ryu-Zing.”²⁶³ In terms of orchestration it is not too different from what is used by other *wadaiko* groups, combining deep *nagadō-daiko* and mounted *katsugi okedō-daiko* sounds with the high, distinctive sound of a tightened *shime-daiko*. The group utilizes the same fundamental orchestration techniques as those created by Oguchi Daihachi in the 1950s: high sounds for the rhythmic foundation and middle and low serving as ‘melody.’ However, “Ryu-Zing” features multiple taiko sets, combining *shime-daiko* and mounted *katsugi okedō-daiko*. Some players have three or four drums, while others have just two. The presence of multiple taiko sets was something rarely seen in *wadaiko* groups. Further, the sound of drums is enhanced by instruments not normally found in ensembles, like the Australian *didgeridoo*, resulting in a different sonic palette.

A constant ostinato on the *shime-daiko* serves as the foundation upon which various sequences of rhythms are played. However, even this ostinato is distinct from those used by previous groups, with the combination of short and long notes resulting in a pattern that only

²⁶³ A video of “Ryu-Zing” has been uploaded by GOCOO to their official YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0o4AofX-T4> (accessed January 12, 2013)

lines up with the downbeat once every three measure (Figure 94; heard beginning at 00:12 in the YouTube video).



Figure 94. *Shime-daiko* ostinato from GOCOO's "Ryu-Zing"

This three-bar ostinato is played under a series of eight-bar sequences by the rest of the ensemble.²⁶⁴ In the first presentation of material, the taiko set players repeat a single rhythm three times, vary on the fourth bar, then repeat this sequence again with a different variation in the eighth bar (Figure 95; 00:36 in the YouTube video). Kaoly Asano occasionally adds slight variation – the addition of a sixteenth note to an eighth-noted based rhythm, for example, such as that occurring on beats three and four of the repeated measures in the transcription below – while the other two taiko set players remain constant.

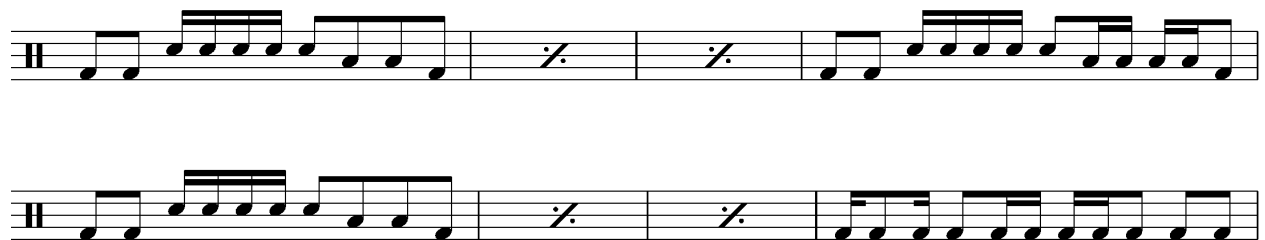


Figure 95. One eight-bar taiko set sequence from "Ryu-Zing"

The notes in different spaces on the staff represent the sound of the drums, from high to low.

²⁶⁴ Given the emphasis on repetition with only slight variation, it is difficult to call it a true 'melody.' Rather, it could be described as a different type of ostinato.

[illegible]

“Ryu-Zing” is driven by the addition or subtraction of different patterns, much in the fashion of the music found in the club atmosphere the group attempts to emulate, with occasional improvisations to add musical variety. For example, following the first presentation of the material described above, the taiko set and *nagadō-daiko* players stop their ostinato and one of the front taiko set players improvises for two eight-bar series (sixteen measures). After this, the taiko set players enter with their original ostinato, while the *nagadō-daiko* players present new material (itself two variations of a four-bar phrase) (Figure 97; 01:28 in the YouTube video).²⁶⁵



²⁶⁵ 01:27 in the YouTube video

The alternation of fixed ensemble patterns and solo improvisations makes up the majority of “Ryu-Zing.” It is only in the final minute of the piece that the driving pulse is disrupted, as all members of the orchestra play a repeating unison rhythm that gradually slows down before ending with a unison hit.

Beyond the repetitive nature of “Ryu-Zing,” the piece – and indeed, GOCOO’s performance style – also stands out due to the visual elements of performance. Group members often hop up and down while they perform, dancing and waving their arms when they are not hitting the drums (and sometimes even as they play).²⁶⁶ The use of taiko sets by multiple players also adds a different visual quality, as performers must move in a different manner than they would when playing a single drum (providing a visual that is as much horizontal as it is vertical). This is a stark contrast from Hayashi Eitetsu and Kenny Endo, who are minimalistic in their movement behind a taiko set. Combined with the group’s unique dress, a GOCOO performance has a look different from other *wadaiko* groups.

The fast ostinatos of “Ryu-Zing” also give the piece a varied sound. While certainly ostinatos are present in many *wadaiko* pieces, especially an ostinato on the *shime-daiko*, this layering of rhythms and off-beat patterns is something rarely found in *wadaiko* music to this point, but rather has more in common with house music. The group has embraced the alternative nature of their performance style, routinely playing at clubs and what they call “Tokyo’s cult locations.”²⁶⁷ They have gained popularity overseas as well, where they have performed at a wide variety of music festivals. That is not to say that they disregard the performance world of

²⁶⁶ See, for example, a sequence from 02:15-02:51 in the YouTube video.

²⁶⁷ http://www.gocoo.de/wer_e.htm (Accessed November 26, 2012)

other *wadaiko* groups, however; in 2001, the group performed as part of the “Nihon no Taiko” concert series at the Japanese National Theater.

Indeed, one should not mistake the pursuit of new musical directions by GOCOO and other members of this new generation of *wadaiko* performers as completely abandoning what has come before. Rather, for many this experimentation has come after long study of *wadaiko* and the various arts that have fed the art form’s growth. One group that exemplifies this approach is the American quartet On Ensemble. Founded in 2001, the group not only typifies the new directions being explored in *wadaiko* but also represents a convergence of the different performance paths and styles that have emerged in the art form since it was founded in the late 1950s.

7.3 ON ENSEMBLE

The four members of On Ensemble – Masato Baba, Kristofer Bergstrom, Shoji Kameda, and Kelvin Underwood – are not only well-versed in *wadaiko* performance practices but in other styles of musical performance as well (Figure 98).²⁶⁸ The talents they bring to On Ensemble

²⁶⁸ The group’s website states that On is to be pronounced “Ohn.” <http://onensemble.org/about/> (accessed March 5, 2013).

Given that early material had the name written as Ōn, not necessarily in terms of an extended ‘o’ (as I have used a macron in my romanizations of Japanese words throughout this dissertation, sometimes otherwise transliterated as ‘oo’ or ‘ou’; see the Preface for a discussion of romanization), but rather in terms of a long or heavy accent.

One possible origin is the Japanese word “*on*,” which means “sound.”

activities help in creating a unique ensemble sound that is a sum of the members' experiences, reflective of where *wadaiko* has come from while also speaking to the direction in which the art form is moving.



Figure 98. On Ensemble

From left to right: Masato Baba, Shoji Kameda, Kelvin Underwood, and Kristofer Bergstrom

From the On Ensemble press kit.

Photo by Ayumi Kameda.

Masato Baba is the son of Russel Baba and Jeanne Mercer, former members of San Francisco Taiko Dojo who are also professional musicians (Baba a saxophonist, and Mercer a drummer).²⁶⁹ In the early 1980s, his parents moved to Mt. Shasta, CA, where they founded the *wadaiko* group Shasta Taiko in 1985. Masato was a member of the group from the start,

²⁶⁹ Biographical information for On Ensemble members taken from interviews with Baba, Bergstrom, and Kaneda conducted in October-November 2011, as well as the group's official press kit. <http://onensemble.org/press-kit/> (accessed November 27, 2012)

beginning to learn *wadaiko* performance from his parents at the age of six.²⁷⁰ He and the other members of Shasta Taiko – beyond Baba’s parents, the group was for a time made up predominantly of area youths, although it is not necessarily billed as a youth group in the manner of other *wadaiko* groups in the United States with a similar participant age range – were encouraged from an early age to compose pieces for the group, experience that would be valuable in Baba’s later professional *wadaiko* career. After graduating from high school in 1996, he moved to Honolulu to attend the University of Hawaii; while in Honolulu he was a member of the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble, learning from Endo while also teaching at the Taiko Center of the Pacific and directing the Taiko Center of the Pacific Youth Group. Following graduation, he traveled to Japan to study with Sukeroku Taiko founding Tosha Kiyonari at the Nihon Taiko Dojo while also learning Tokyo festival music from Suzuki Kyosuke (member of the Wakayama Shachū performance troupe, former member of Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, and frequent collaborator with Kenny Endo).

Kristofer Bergstrom began playing *wadaiko* in college in 1995 as a member of Stanford Taiko.²⁷¹ Following graduation in 1999, he moved to Japan to teach English in Hakodate city on the northern island of Hokkaido. While in Japan, Bergstrom studied traditional dance and shamisen; in 2008, he received a *natori* (stage name) in *nagauta shamisen*, a style of *shamisen* performance associated with the kabuki theater. He also spent time in Tokyo studying *wadaiko* with Tosha Kiyonari at the Nihon Taiko Dojo.²⁷²

²⁷⁰ He also learned flute, and today is an accomplished *fue* player as well.

²⁷¹ <http://www.stanford.edu/group/stanfordtaiko/cgi-bin/members.php> (accessed April 14, 2013)

²⁷² Nihon Taiko Dojo has become primary center for Americans to study *wadaiko* while in Japan, based on the recommendations of Tanaka Seiichi and Kenny Endo. More about this will be discussed in the next chapter.

Shoji Kameda also grew up in Mt. Shasta, learning *wadaiko* performance and composition from Russel Baba and Jeanne Mercer as a member of Shasta Taiko. He attended college at Stanford University, where he was a member of Stanford Taiko; in addition, he spent a year in Hawaii as a member of the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble. Following graduation in 1999, he moved to Japan, where he spent two years studying with Tosha Kiyonari and Suzuki Kyosuke; in addition, he studied *hōgaku-hayashi* with Mochizuki Saburo (founding member of Sukeroku Taiko, who was also Kenny Endo's teacher).

Kelvin Underwood first encountered *wadaiko* when Ondekoza visited his high school during their early 1990s marathon tour of the United States. He showed great interest in the troupe following their performance, grabbing the attention of Den Tagayasu. Den invited him to help out with a portion of the group's tour, occasionally bringing him on stage to perform. In 1994, after graduating high school and studying in college for a year, Underwood accepted an invitation from Den to join Ondekoza.²⁷³ After four years, he left the group to return to school, graduating from the Berklee School of Music with a focus in drum set performance. Following graduation, he moved to San Francisco to pursue a career as a professional musician.

7.3.1 The Beginning of On Ensemble – “Watashi Watashitachi”

In the early years of the 21st Century, Baba, Bergstrom, and Kameda were all living and studying in Japan. With Kameda as the connecting figure, having grown up with Baba and performed alongside Bergstrom as a member of Stanford Taiko, the trio occasionally got together both

²⁷³ http://www.taiko.com/taiko_resource/news/inter_underwood_121797.html (accessed November 27, 2012)

socially and in different musical situations. When Bergstrom chose to return to the United States in 2001, the trio decided to put on a concert, which took place on April 9 of that year.²⁷⁴ In addition to presenting the musical styles that they were learning in Japan – particularly Bergstrom, as this concert was serving as his final performance in Japan under the auspices of the Wakayagi school of traditional dance and Kineya school of shamisen performance – the trio decided to compose original works for the concert. They gathered whatever drums they could acquire – much as Oguchi Daihachi did at the beginning of Osuwa Daiko’s activities (see Chapter 2.1.1) – and created repertoire to fit the ragtag collection of instruments.

One of the works written for this concert was “Watashi Watashitachi” (“I, Us”), composed by Kameda.²⁷⁵ Owing to some degree to the sparse resources available for the trio, the instrumentation is minimal: one *shime-daiko*, a *sumō-daiko* (a small *byō-uchi-daiko* used in *sumō* ceremonies and also increasingly within *wadaiko* sets – see Chapter 6.2.1), and a *katsugi okedō-daiko*. All three drums are placed on low stands and played by the performers as they sit in chairs set in a slightly-diagonal line on stage, giving an appearance of slight depth to the setup (Figure 99).

²⁷⁴ <http://onensemble.org/press-kit/> (accessed March 5, 2013)

²⁷⁵ A video of this piece has been uploaded by Kameda to his YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQ62Kak1LxA> (accessed January 12, 2013)



Figure 99. "Watashi Watashitachi"

L to R: Baba playing a *sumō-daiko*, Kameda a *shime-daiko*, and Bergstrom a *katsugi okedō-daiko*

Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, Cerritos, CA, March 2, 2007

Screenshot from the DVD *On Ensemble Live at the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts* (On Ensemble 2008)

This simple instrumentation forced the players to instead explore the various sounds that could be produced on the drums, much in the spirit of Ishii Maki's "Monochrome" or the experimentation on the *ō-daiko* by Hayashi Eitetsu. In addition to the standard practice of hitting the head and rim of the drum with a drumstick, a performance of "Watashi Watashitachi" also involves a number of extended techniques, including scraping the drumstick rapidly across the head, laying the drumstick across the head and striking with the majority of the wood (in a manner similar to a drum set cross stick technique, in which the tip of the drumstick is placed near the rim of the drum and the shaft of the stick is struck on the rim opposite of the tip), and using one's hand to dampen the sound. Through the combination of all these sounds and techniques, the players produce a sonically-diverse composition using only three instruments.

Just as the instrumentation for “Watashi Watashitachi” is fairly simple, the organization of the piece is rather minimalistic. The piece is essentially a series of four-bar phrases, each a set of variations on four basic rhythmic patterns. These patterns – interlocking, and combining a number of extended performance practices – are divided amongst the three players, played overtop one another, and are often complimented with improvisatory sections.

A standard performance opens with an opening improvisation by Baba on the *sumō-daiko*. Kameda – on the *shime-daiko* – and Bergstrom – on the *katsugi okedō-daiko* – soon join in with timed scratching on their drumheads (indicated in the below transcription as a round notehead with a line through it; 01:38 in the YouTube video). As the left hand and drumstick rest on the far edge of the drumhead (away from the player) so as to mute the sound, the drumstick in the right hand quietly scratches out three bars of sixteenth-notes before fading out in the first two beats of the fourth (which I call pattern A - Figure 100). In this fourth measure, they move their left hands down towards their body as the right hand rapidly speeds up, causing the scratching to raise in pitch due to the reduced area between the hand and edge of the drumhead.²⁷⁶ This experimentation with different drum sounds not only hearkens back to the work of Hayashi Eitetsu in the 1980s, who explored various sounds that can be created on the *ō-daiko* (see Chapter 6.1), but it also echoes some of the techniques explored by Ishii Maki in his piece “Monochrome” (Chapter 4.4).

²⁷⁶ See, for example, 01:38-01:45 in the YouTube clip.

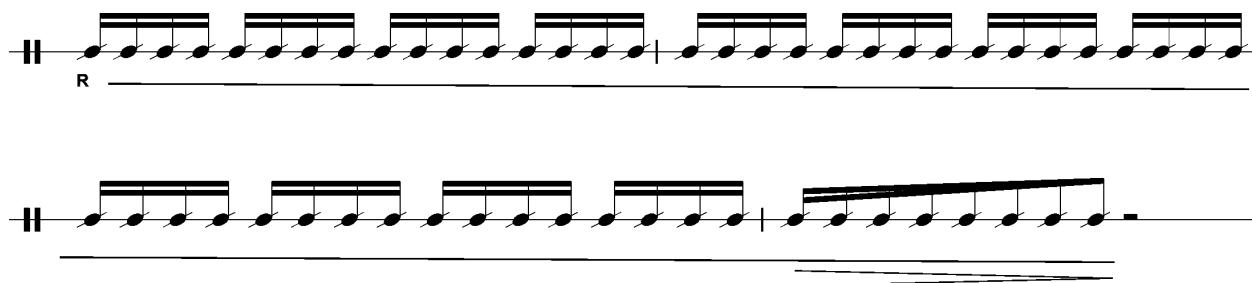


Figure 100. Pattern A of "Watashi Watashitachi": Scratching the drumhead²⁷⁷

Eventually, Baba ends his solo and begins a new four-bar rhythmic pattern, alternating between playing on the drumhead and on the rim of the drum (pattern B - Figure 101; 01:45 in the YouTube video). The notes on the drumhead are played on the right hand, the rim by the left. This division and association of different hands to different sounds plays an important role through “Watashi Watashitachi”; much of the sonic variety of the piece – particularly in the second half – is created by complex sticking patterns that incorporate different sounds assigned to each hand.

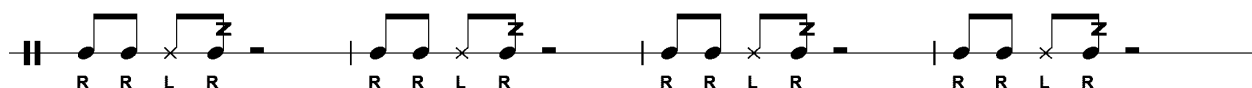


Figure 101. Pattern B: drumhead and rim

The Z on the fourth note represents pressing down on the head as the drumstick hits, creating a short buzzing sound

²⁷⁷ Given that “Watashi Watashitachi” includes a number of extended techniques not typically used in *wadaiko*, I will be using a number of less-common notations to indicate these techniques. All are explained in the text.

This layering of patterns, with a four bar phrase repeated twice before the rhythms are changed, sets up an eight bar cycle found through the piece. Eventually, Bergstrom begins a new rhythm (Pattern C); another combination of drumhead and rim sounds, it complements Pattern B while fitting into the rhythmic foundation laid by Pattern A (Figure 102; 01:59 in the YouTube clip). These three patterns serve as the foundation of the first half of “Watashi Watashitachi”; they cycle around the ensemble, each performer having a chance to play each one.

The figure displays two systems of musical notation for three performers: Baba, Kameda, and Bergstrom. The notation is organized into two systems, each spanning two measures. The first system is labeled with 'Pattern B' for Baba, 'Pattern A' for Kameda, and 'Pattern C' for Bergstrom. The second system shows a variation where Kameda plays a new pattern while Baba and Bergstrom continue theirs. The notation uses various note values, rests, and accidentals to represent the rhythms. Specific notes are labeled with 'R' (right hand) and 'L' (left hand) to indicate the hand used for each sound. For example, in the first system, Baba's Pattern B consists of a sequence of notes labeled R, R, L, R. Kameda's Pattern A is a continuous stream of notes, all labeled R. Bergstrom's Pattern C consists of notes labeled L, R, L. The second system shows Kameda's pattern changing to a new sequence of notes, while Baba and Bergstrom's patterns remain the same.

Figure 102. The first three patterns of "Watashi Watashitachi," played simultaneously

Eventually, after a series of solos by different members of the ensemble, Kameda plays a new variation on a rhythm that serves as a signal for the transition to the second half of the piece. This new rhythm is another example of the way in which a combination of right and left hand movements, with different sounds and techniques assigned to each hand, help to create a

dynamic sonic palate; Kameda switches between hitting the drum with the right hand and producing a cross stick sound by laying the left hand stick over the drum and hitting so that the entire drumstick hits the head at the same time (Figure 103; 04:04 in the YouTube video).

The figure shows musical notation for three drummers: Baba, Kameda, and Bergstrom. The notation is divided into two measures. Baba and Bergstrom play a simple pattern of quarter notes: R, R, L, R. Kameda plays a more complex pattern of eighth notes, alternating between right-hand hits (R) and cross-stick hits (L, represented by a triangle-shaped note head). The cross-stick hits are indicated by a triangle-shaped note head.

Figure 103. The opening phrase of the second half

The triangle-shaped note head represents a cross-stick hit with the left hand.

The combination R/drum-L/cross stick sound demonstrated by Kameda in this middle passage becomes a signature element of the second half of “Watashi Watashitachi,” with different versions of the pattern appearing through the half. It even makes its way into Pattern B, as played by Baba and Bergstrom, with the combination of sounds serving as a tab at the end of the phrase (as seen with some variation in the fourth measure of Figure 103).

With this new sixteenth note-based framework established, a fourth primary rhythmic pattern is introduced (Pattern D) featuring more complex rhythms than had previously been used.

Note: this rhythm is one of a few used at the end of Pattern D

The notehead with a circle with a dot in the middle represents the muting of the drum by the left hand, while the diamond-shaped notehead represents the hitting of the muted drumhead by the right hand.

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Upon the introduction of Pattern D, a new cycle begins combining the various patterns. In addition to the four core patterns previously examined, the right/left sixteenth-note rhythmic combination seen in Figure 103 is also utilized, creating a much busier rhythmic palette than what is found in the first half of the piece (it is hard to call it a “Pattern” in the mold of the other rhythms given this title, as it does not appear as often or with the same frequency). Eventually, the group decreases in volume, and each player takes a turn alternating brief one-measure solos with variations of the sixteenth-note pattern before “Watashi Watashitachi” ends dramatically with a chain of sixteenth-note rhythmic patterns.

“Watashi Watashitachi” is reflective of the new style of *wadaiko* performance that was emerging at the beginning of the 21st Century, influenced by artists like Hayashi Eitetsu and Kenny Endo. The small ensemble approach taken by Baba, Bergstrom, and Kameda allowed for a greater range of expression than what was possible in the typical large ensemble *wadaiko* group. It was similar to the approach taken by many *wadaiko* soloists, both in terms of the exploration of new sounds and the integration of more complex rhythms and performance techniques. Soon after the April 2009 concert, the trio all moved back to the United States and decided to continue activities together as On Ensemble. At the same time, Baba and Kameda became involved in a new *wadaiko* group in Los Angeles called TAIKOPROJECT, a gathering of *wadaiko* players in their 20s who had all played in youth or collegiate groups. Among the founding members of the group was Michelle Fujii (formerly of UCLA Kyodo Taiko and San Jose Taiko), Yuta Kato (an early member of the San Francisco Taiko Dojo Rising Stars youth group and a member of groups at UCLA), and Bryan Yamami (who began with San Jose Taiko Junior Taiko before joining Kinnara Taiko during college).²⁷⁸

²⁷⁸ Fujii’s biography can be found at http://mi-fu.me/?page_id=11 (accessed March 5, 2013)

Fujii, Kato, and Yamami occasionally joined Baba, Bergstrom, and Kameda for On Ensemble performances.²⁷⁹ At the same time, however, the original trio also became acquainted with Kelvin Underwood, who had begun to occasionally perform in the Los Angeles area. On Ensemble began evolving into a new quartet/quintet format, with new works composed to fit these numbers. Eventually, Fujii, Kato, and Yamami stopped performing with the group, and Underwood became a permanent member; with this, On Ensemble was officially established as a quartet. As they composed new pieces, the group continued to explore the musical boundaries of *wadaiko* as expressed in a small ensemble setting. In addition to exploring different rhythm and sound combinations, they also added new instruments into the group, such as the koto, and experimented with different types of taiko sets. Eventually, Kameda presented the group with the framework for what has become one of On Ensemble's signatures works: "Yamasong."²⁸⁰

A version of Kato's biography can be found at <http://rockymountaintaikosummit2012.wordpress.com/yuta-kato-workshops/> (accessed March 5, 2013)

Yamami's biography can be found at <http://www.taikoproject.com/02/content/bio-bryan.html> (accessed March 5, 2013)

²⁷⁹ Several recordings featuring these three guest artists have been published in various formats. A 2003 performance of Kameda's work "Zeecha" featuring Yamami alongside the three original members of On Ensemble was included as a bonus feature in the 2005 DVD "The Spirit of Taiko." *Big Drum: Taiko in the United States*.

Meanwhile, a 2005 concert with Fujii, Kato, and Kelvin Underwood appearing alongside Kameda and Bergstrom was captured for On Ensemble's 2005 DVD "Neiro." *On Ensemble, Neiro*, (On Ensemble, 2005), DVD.

²⁸⁰ The "Yama-" in the title may refer to the Japanese word for "mountain" ("yama"), and could be a reference to Mt. Shasta where Baba and Kameda were raised.

7.3.2 “Yamasong”

Where “Watashi Watashitachi” is minimalistic, utilizing only three drums, “Yamasong” represents the broader range of instrumentation possibilities sought by modern *wadaiko* artists.²⁸¹ Each player has a taiko set of varying sizes, bringing together a wide mix of instruments (seen partially in Figure 105). Bergstrom has the smallest set, using only a *nagado-daiko* and a *sumō-daiko*. Kameda’s set is almost as small, adding a pair of woodblock-like instruments to a *shime-daiko* and *okedō-daiko*. Underwood uses a *nagadō-daiko* and *katsugi okedō-daiko*, but his set also features two cymbals placed on each side of the drum set; to his right is a crash cymbal (a thin cymbal typically used for accent in Western orchestral and popular music), with a pair of hi-hat cymbals on a stand to his left (a pair of smaller, thicker cymbals placed on a stand, which can be brought together via a foot pedal). Baba, meanwhile, has the most complex set of the group: in addition to a *nagadō-daiko* and *shime-daiko*, he also has a long, deep tom-tom used for accentuation that is akin to a Brazilian *tam tam* drum (a deep-sounding drum used in samba and other Brazilian musical genres). His set also features a number of other instruments, including an *uchiwa-daiko*, a tambourine, a Buddhist prayer bell, and several cymbals.

²⁸¹ A performance of “Yamasong” has been uploaded by Kameda to his YouTube channel. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGMfP81c_UA (accessed January 12, 2013)



Figure 105. Partial setup for "Yamasong"

Left to Right: Underwood, Baba, Bergstrom

Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, March 2, 2007

From the On Ensemble press kit.

Photo by Jason Lew.

This introduction of cymbals into the taiko set is evocative of greater trends in the makeup of taiko sets used by solo artists, echoing early experimentations with metallic instruments by Hayashi Eitetsu and Kenny Endo, who included gongs of various sizes in their early taiko sets (a practice that Hayashi continues today). Adding sonic variety to the set, a metallic contrast to all the deep drums, the use of cymbals also harkens back to a Western drum set; indeed, with the inclusion of cymbals the distance between the taiko set and the drum set is reduced. There is one primary difference between the two in regards to usage, however: the Western practice of playing the primary rhythmic foundation on cymbals – such as, for example, a swing pattern on a ride cymbal – has not carried over to the taiko set, where cymbals are instead used to provide color and accent.

In “Yamasong,” the four taiko sets are further complemented by a *koto* played by Bergstrom and singing by Kameda. This rich arrangement of instruments is reflective of the various ways that some contemporary *wadaiko* artists – particularly those belonging to the younger generation of performers – explore the possibilities of the art form. Not just limiting themselves to taiko, these performers have begun experimenting with the inclusion of different instruments, expanding their sonic palette while figuring out which work best with different drums. It follows trends begun by Kodo in the 1980s, when they began experimenting with steel drums and other melodic instruments (see Chapter 4.6.2).²⁸²

“Yamasong” opens with a flurry of hits on the cymbals and drums by Baba and Underwood. This blast of sound is followed by a combination of sounds rarely heard in a *wadaiko* ensemble: Bergstrom provides a drone on the *koto*, bowing one of the lower strings while intentionally emphasizing the change in bowing direction to provide a bit of a break in the continued sound, while Kameda sings using Mongolian throat singing techniques learned through a series of cultural exchanges at the beginning of the 21st Century.²⁸³ Like many of On Ensemble’s works, “Yamasong” embraces the many musical talents of the ensemble’s members, creating a complex sound that extends beyond the core drumming of *wadaiko*.

²⁸² At the same time, this continues a practice stated by Ondekoza, who in the 1970s began to incorporate *shamisen* performance into their concerts.

²⁸³ The use of a bow on a *koto* is one of a number of extended techniques that have emerged for the instrument, creating a sound similar to the Chinese *erhu*, Japanese *kokyū*, or Korean *a-jaeng*.

However, Bergstrom admits that he has no training on the *koto*, and has simply experimented with the different sounds that could be made on the instrument.

The drone provided by Bergstrom is an octave equivalent of the fundamental tone sung by Kameda, who also adds a series of whistling harmonics that in the throat singing tradition are meant to represent the sound of wind (Miller and Shahriari 2012, 217).²⁸⁴ After a series of long ostinato notes, Bergstrom and Kameda begin to add a rhythmic pulse to their drones, while Baba and Underwood play a backbeat – “an accent on nominal weak beats,” typically played on beats two and four – on hi-hat (Underwood) and a grouping of several thin sticks of bamboo similar to a German rute (Baba), while also adding two eighth notes on the first beat and rhythmic flourishes throughout the rest of the measure (02:12 in the YouTube video) (Baur 2002).

Eventually, Kameda ends his singing, and Bergstrom plucks a short, repeated melodic pattern on *koto*. This brief melodic venture is soon interrupted by a sudden crescendo by the drums, leading into an eight bar drum interlude where the relationship of Underwood and Baba’s extended taiko sets to the Western drum set is laid bare: they use cymbals, tambourine, and drums to play a Western rock pattern, hi-hat and tambourine laying down the rhythmic foundation with low drums on beats one and three and high drums on two and four (Figure 106; 05:15 in the YouTube video). This interlude gives Bergstrom time to move from the *koto* to his taiko set, as well as sets the tone for the rest of “Yamasong.”

²⁸⁴ As this section is partially improvised, as it is difficult to capture the nature of Mongolian throat singing in a Western staff notation – not to mention that the majority of this dissertation is focused on rhythmic development – this section is not transcribed.

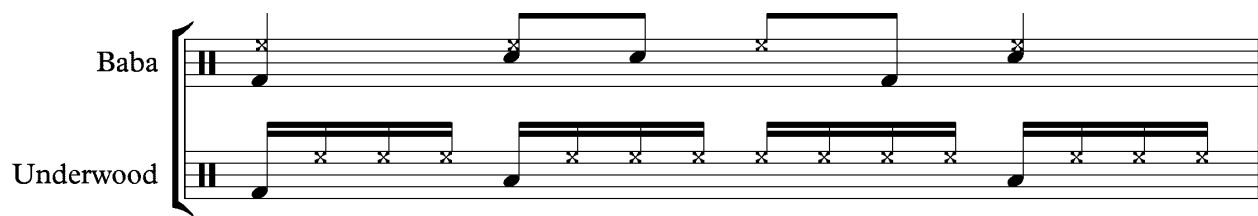


Figure 106. Repeated backbeat pattern played by Baba and Underwood in "Yamasong"

In Baba's part, the ornate X-shaped notehead represents hits on the tambourine, while on Underwood's part they represent notes on the hit-hat cymbals.

The full noteheads in the spaces on the staff represent low, medium, and high-pitched drums.

The flowing nature of the first half of the piece, highlighting Kameda's singing and the *koto*, is contrasted by a driving drum-based second half featuring complex rhythms alternating between drums (similar in sticking at times to the sixteenth note rhythms of "Watashi Watashitachi"). A series of four-bar phrases unfolds in which one player plays a sixteenth-note pattern while the rest accompanying him with a sparser rhythmic progression (as seen Figure 107; 05:40 in the YouTube video).

Figure 107. Excerpt from "Yamasong"

Notes beneath the staff line represent a low-pitched drum; above the staff, a high-pitched drum (in this instance, a combination of a *nagadō-daiko* and *shime-daiko* or *sumō-daiko*)

After each player has performed the sixteenth-note sequence, and following a segment in which the ensemble plays a variation of the sixteenth-note pattern for three measures and in the fourth measure one person improvises, the work moves into a sequence of fast rhythms combining high and low sounds along with complex movement between the drums. One member plays a sixteenth-note ostinato on the rim of a drum while the other three perform a complex series of rhythms and movement (Figure 108; 06:25 in the YouTube video).²⁸⁵



Figure 108. Excerpt from the second half of "Yamasong"

This sequence transitions into a new series with similar orchestration: one person plays a pattern while the rest play a quarter-note ostinato on the rim of a drum. After the first eight-bar, a

²⁸⁵ As the part assignments change with each repeat of the segment, there are no names given in the subsequent transcriptions.

second player joins in with a counter-rhythm (while the rest continue the ostinato); the way in which rhythms run across the bar lines and the combination of high and low sounds creates a complex layering of sounds that complicates the rhythmic structure (Figure 109; 06:38 in the YouTube video).

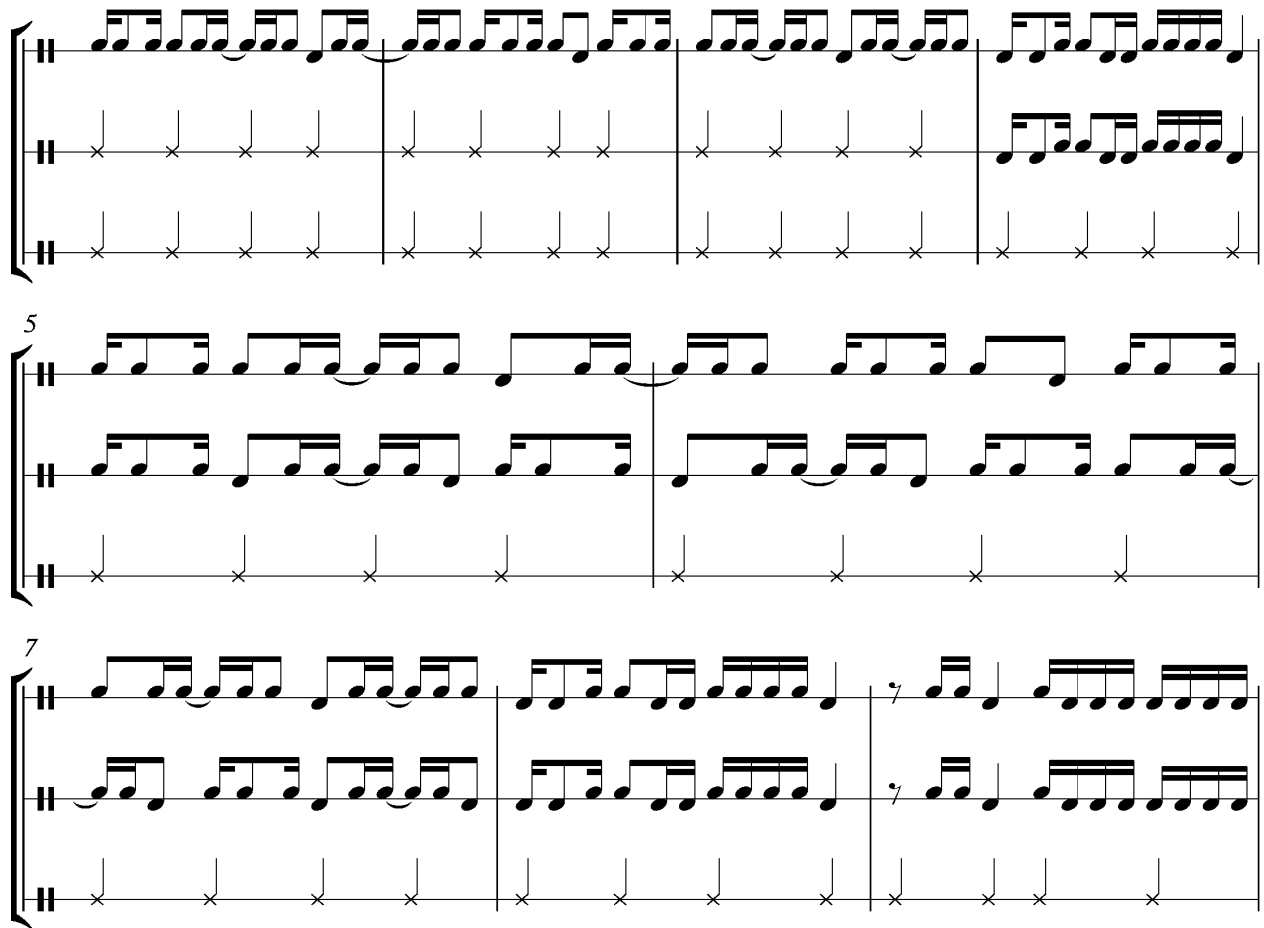


Figure 109. Excerpt from "Yamasong"

This cycle is repeated several times, until the group returns again to the initial four-bar phrase of the second half. Again, this is succeeded by the three-bar group/one-bar solo improvisation segment, the dynamics gradually decreasing with each repeat until "Yamasong" ends with all members scraping their drumsticks in a circle around the edges of the drumheads.

Opening with a bang, the piece ends with near-silence, the scraping of the drumsticks sounding like waves quietly crashing against a beach.

With its combination of singing, strings, drums and percussion instruments, “Yamasong” is one of the primary pieces On Ensemble members refer to when they call their performance style a “world fusion mix.”²⁸⁶ This is as much a reflection of the nature of *wadaiko* – and “taiko,” as the art form is called in the United States – as anything else, an attempt by members to free themselves from audience expectations and notions amongst performers of the art form about how it ‘should’ be performed. While the combination of sounds used in “Yamasong” is not unheard of in *wadaiko* – Kodo has featured strings and wind instruments, and even more unusual instruments like steel drums, on their audio recordings – works featuring more unusual instrument combinations are rarely played in concert. Meanwhile, there is a rhythmic complexity within “Yamasong” – particularly in the second half of the work – that is rare in *wadaiko* repertoire. It is something that would be almost impossible to do in a large ensemble format, as the sounds would get easily muddled, but the quartet makeup of On Ensemble allows for a greater degree of musical experimentation.

On Ensemble is in many regards representative of the next generation of *wadaiko* performers. Building upon the foundation established during the latter half of the 20th Century, group members approach the art with a greater level of technical ability than previously demonstrated by most *wadaiko* artists, allowing in turn the creation of more dynamic and complex compositions. At the same time, they have embraced a wider range of musical experiences, resulting in a great variety in their compositions; other On Ensemble works utilize

²⁸⁶ <http://onensemble.org/press-kit/> (accessed November 28, 2012)

This issue will be discussed in the following section and in Chapter 8.

bronze gongs taken from Indonesian gamelan ensembles, record scratching (the rhythmic moving of a vinyl record back and forth on a turntable), and Western drum set in addition to the wide range of instruments integrated into their taiko sets (most pieces feature a taiko set of some sort). However, this experimentation – along with the musical style developed by GOCOO and other artists – has led many of this new generation to question the degree to which they even belong within the same category of performance as their *wadaiko* teachers and predecessors.

7.4 A NEW ERA FOR WADAIKO PERFORMANCE

On Ensemble's music is a reflection of its members. Just as each member has a wide range of skills combining standard *wadaiko* experience with other musical explorations, the group's repertoire pushes the boundaries of *wadaiko* beyond the standard practice developed by Osuwa Daiko, Sukeroku Taiko, and Ondekoza/Kodo. Perhaps for this reason, the group chooses to characterize its performance style as a "world fusion mix."²⁸⁷ In recognition of the group's venturing into new musical territories, new means of representations have been pursued by the group, as members are not satisfied with simply calling themselves a "taiko group."

On Ensemble is not alone in choosing to represent itself in a new manner. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Tokyo-based group GOCOO calls itself a "band." Similarly, members of another Japanese group formed in recent years, Bachiatar, call their ensemble an "alternative

²⁸⁷ <http://onensemble.org/press-kit/> (accessed December 3, 2012)

wadaiko unit.”²⁸⁸ Much like On Ensemble and GOCOO, many of the members of Bachiatairi began their training in more established *wadaiko* groups; several of the members are former members of Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, also having trained in *hōgaku-hayashi* and other forms of traditional Japanese performance.²⁸⁹

The decision by these groups to declare themselves as a different type of *wadaiko* group than predecessors like Kodo or Oedo Sukeroku Taiko reflects a shift in the larger discourse of *wadaiko* performance. Certainly, the degree to which these ensembles are different musically varies from group to group. On Ensemble’s works have little in common with the music composed by other groups, but at the same time they could be seen as a continuation of the experimentation done by artists like Hayashi Eitetsu and Kenny Endo. GOCOO’s visuals separate them from other *wadaiko* ensembles, while musically the group looks to separate itself through the presence of a “groove” in its music.”²⁹⁰ However, the inclusion of new forms of music like house by these groups is ideologically similar to past experimentations by *wadaiko* groups (such as San Jose Taiko’s utilization of jazz).

²⁸⁸ In Japanese, “*orutanatibu wadaiko yunitto*,” using transliterated versions of the English words “alternative” and “unit”

Founded in 2009, Bachiatairi is based in Saitama Prefecture. <http://www.bachiatairi.jp/profile/profile.html> (accessed December 3, 2012)

²⁸⁹ One of the members, Ishizuka Yuu, is the son of Sukeroku Taiko founding member Mochizuki Saburo, while several others trained under Mochizuki as members of the group “Hatoyama Dō-in no Kai.” <http://www.bachiatairi.jp/member/member.html> (accessed December 3, 2012)

²⁹⁰ Interestingly, this idea absent from GOCOO’s English profile, yet emphasized in their Japanese profile. <http://japan.gocoo.tv/about/> (accessed December 3, 2012)

These groups' desire to separate themselves from other *wadaiko* groups appears to be based on grounds more ideological than musical. By embracing such terms as “alternative” and “fusion,” they look to become detached from what they perceive to be a codified manner of *wadaiko* performance. Indeed, in GOCOO's profile members declare that “usual Taiko ensembles stoically pursue a traditional style,” but they are different.²⁹¹ The definition of this “traditional style” is left unspoken, but it is implied that the free nature of GOCOO's performances run counter to the standard mode of *wadaiko* performance.

Bachiatari members present their perspective in the group's profile:

Recently referred to as the *wadaiko* boom, the “*wadaiko* music” that continued to be cultivated in the post-war period was first founded as a single genre, establishing an image of “*wadaiko*” in the minds of those that see and hear it. However, if we learn from the Japanese classical theater world, then even though it has been fixed in a single “form,” isn't the history of *wadaiko* music still in its early stages? Thus, without remaining fixed to a single idea, we members of the alternative *wadaiko* group Bachiatari advocate the continued exploration of new possibilities for *wadaiko*, wondering if we could not create the history of what the true “form” will be in the end.²⁹²

This statement is both a critique of standard forms of *wadaiko* representation and a reflection on how the musical genre has developed. In its profile, Bachiatari advocates the continued exploration of *wadaiko*'s possibilities, while also implying that in many cases *wadaiko* has

²⁹¹ http://www.gocoo.de/wer_e.htm (accessed December 3, 2012)

²⁹² <http://www.bachiatari.jp/profile/profile.html> (accessed December 3, 2012)

become fixed in a certain mode of performance.²⁹³ The statement also suggests that it is too early to start thinking of *wadaiko* as a fixed performance style, let alone anything approaching “traditional,” positioning the art form in relation to Japanese classical theater.

Because of their increased exposure to not just *wadaiko* performance styles but classical and more established folk performance styles, the new generation of performers has perhaps a slightly different perspective on *wadaiko* performance than their predecessors. They realize the potential limitations of the art form as it has evolved as a group-oriented musical genre, and thus seek new ways to push *wadaiko* creatively. Soloist Kageyama Isaku, formerly of the Tokyo-based group Amanojaku (founded by a former Sukeroku Daiko member), cites this as one reason that he chose to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston; in studying Western orchestration techniques and musical history, jazz drumming and world hand percussion, he looks to gather a more rounded collection of musical skills from which he can draw from as he moves forward as a *wadaiko* soloist (personal interview, January 8, 2012). At the same time, Kageyama advocates the study of not just *wadaiko* and Western music, but also the traditional musical genres that have influenced the development of *wadaiko* (such as *hōgaku* and regional festival music), as he feels this knowledge is essential to truly understanding *wadaiko* performance.

Believing that they unable to continue to push the art form forward as part of more established groups, members of the new generation of professional *wadaiko* performers have often formed their own groups in order to explore different performance possibilities. This is not a blind exploration of *wadaiko* performance, however, as these performers typically have a solid foundation in the fundamentals of different *wadaiko* performance styles. Indeed, it is only after

²⁹³ Just what this mode of performance is, and the implications of its intercultural spread, shall be explored in the following chapter.

acquiring these foundations that they have chosen to pursue their own unique form of musical expression. The artistic journey taken by this new generation of performers is not all that different from that of the taiko soloists that emerged in the 1980s and early 1990s. Performers like Kenny Endo and Hayashi Eitetsu pursued solo careers after becoming well-versed in standard *wadaiko* performance as well as more traditional forms of performance.

This approach is perhaps best summed up by a poster hung by Kenny Endo at the Taiko Center of the Pacific, containing the phrase “Tradition as a Basis for Innovation” (Figure 110). Endo describes his experience studying *hōgaku* as a time that gave him “more of a palate to work with in terms of [his] own musical ideas” (personal interview, June 29, 2010). This concept has been echoed by members of On Ensemble as well as Kageyama.

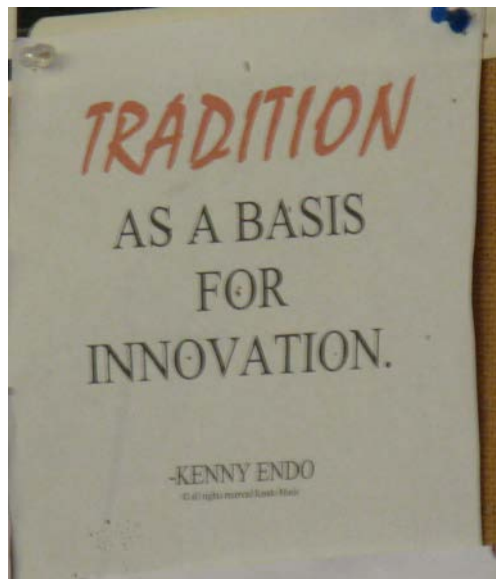


Figure 110. “Tradition as a Basis for Innovation” Poster at the Taiko Center of the Pacific

Photo by the author, taken in Honolulu, HI, June 11, 2009

From this viewpoint, then, the artistic experimentations of this new generation of performers are not a sudden outpouring of creative activity, but a progression of forces that have

been building for several decades. Groups like On Ensemble and GOCOO are simply continuing down the path established by soloists in the 1980s (and even by prior artists, it could be argued, as embodied by Ondekoza when they commissioned Ishii Maki's minimalistic "Monochrome" in the mid-1970s, which certainly is as avant-garde as more recent pieces). And yet, there remains a perceived need by this new generation of performers to stand apart from the standard realm of *wadaiko* performance, an ideological stance that justifies the experimentation pursued by these artists.

This perceived response to "traditional" *wadaiko* is to some degree a reaction to the discourses that have arisen in relation to the art form. Nearly sixty years after Oguchi Daihachi began experimenting in central Japan, the manner in which *wadaiko* music has developed and is performed has given rise to a number of discourses and intercultural issues reliant on the movement of pieces and artists between Japan and the United States. These discourses connect ideas of "tradition" with discussions of creativity, performance rights, and originality, a response to the manner in which *wadaiko* is developed since it first emerged in the mid-1950s.

8.0 CREATIVITY, TRADITION, AND LANGUAGE IN INTERCULTURAL WADAIKO PERFORMANCE

In this dissertation, I have constructed a history of *wadaiko* based on the development of musical style, analyzing specific works and compositional practices (including form, rhythm, and instrumentation). I have also considered other factors, including specific contributions by notable artists through several generations, inter-genre borrowings, and the intercultural growth of the art form in Japan and the United States (including a survey of intercultural relationships between performers, how they are reflected in music, and how they have changed over time). Further, I have highlighted recurring themes like tradition, examining how they have been invoked by musicians and linking them to compositions and performance practices.

While the previous chapters have included individual case studies, organized chronologically as well as thematically, in this chapter I shall present a general survey of these subjects. Opening with a discussion of how *wadaiko* music has changed over time, I will demonstrate how this change is related to the manner in which creativity and originality are conceptualized by performers. Further, I will demonstrate how these formations are related to discourses of tradition, the intercultural transmission of knowledge, and how these processes have affected discussions of copyright and performance rights, surveying the various issues that have emerged in the United States as a result of how *wadaiko* music has developed. This shall lead into a discussion of linguistic issues present within *wadaiko* as an intercultural art form, as I

highlight how the continued development of the genre has been affected by the language that performers use.

Even as this dissertation has examined the development of *wadaiko* musical style as it occurred in both Japan and the United States, the discussion in this chapter shall focus largely on certain events and discourses as they have transpired in the United States. There are several reasons for this. The examination of *wadaiko* discourse in the United States has been a major topic of study for scholars (in both English and Japanese); thus, these discussions have been well-documented. Additionally, much of the global transmission of *wadaiko* information has first been mediated through groups and individuals in the United States; as such, a study of dialogues in this country can serve as a foundation from which studies of the genre on a global level can proceed. Finally, the intercultural linguistic issues that have arisen in regards to *wadaiko* performance are most evident when forums and discussions in the United States are examined.

8.1 WADAIKO MUSIC, “TRADITION,” AND PERFORMANCE RIGHTS

Ever since Oguchi Daihachi and Osuwa Daiko first gave a performance at a textile association banquet in central Japan in 1957, the music performed by *wadaiko* artists has been ever-changing. Oguchi created new compositions that took elements from a regional folk tradition believed to be lost and combined them with features taken from jazz and other popular music of the time (Chapter 2). While Oguchi's emphasis on taiko as the main instrument of performance was in itself a major shift, a break from the performance practices of folk and theatrical drumming in which the drums are part of a larger ensemble and generally serve as accompaniment, his instrumentation and orchestration techniques proved to be just as influential. He divided groups

of drums into high, middle, and low pitch ranges, assigning each group to a specific role within the ensemble (fundamental rhythm, melody, and accent, respectively) (Chapter 2.1.1). This orchestration technique, he later noted, was something he fashioned “when thinking completely about a band” (Oguchi 1995, 13). It would have a large influence on the future development of *wadaiko* repertoire, serving as a model for other composers.

Even as Oguchi Daihachi and Osuwa Daiko increased performance activities in the 1960s, a group of young men from Tokyo, all champions of local competitions in the folk drumming style called *bon daiko*, came together to form the group Sukeroku Taiko (Chapter 3). Like Oguchi, they brought elements from regional drumming styles into their music – in this case, the festival music of the Tokyo *Shitamachi* area. However, they also integrated elements from *hōgaku*, the music of Japanese theatrical genres like Noh and kabuki. Sukeroku Taiko was the first professional *wadaiko* group in Japan, and its style combining folk and theatrical music would continue to develop even after the original group split, with many of the original members pursuing full-time *hōgaku* performance careers.

Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko were soon joined by a third major player on the *wadaiko* scene: Ondekoza (Chapter 4). Based on the island of Sado, off the western coast of Japan in the Sea of Japan, Ondekoza was founded out of founder Den Tagayasu’s desire to see a revitalization (“*fukkatsu*”) of local folk arts. However, where Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko drew from the drumming styles of the region where they were based, Ondekoza’s music took inspiration from across Japan. Indeed, in some of their pieces they presented arrangements of festival music from various towns adapted in order to fit a concert setting. At the same time, members like Hayashi Eitetsu helped to create a new individual performance style for the *ō-daiko* that had a huge impact on the continued growth on the art form. Ondekoza’s original

members would split from Den Tagayasu in the early 1980s, continuing many of the same activities under the name Kodo.

In the late 1960s, *wadaiko* was brought to the United States by Tanaka Seiichi, who combined the performance practices of Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko as he created the San Francisco Taiko Doukougai (which later became the San Francisco Taiko Dojo) (Chapter 5). However, Tanaka was not alone in his activities, as Kinnara Taiko, a group from a Buddhist temple in Los Angeles, emerged around the same time. They linked their music not to Japanese festival drumming traditions but to the Buddhist *hōraku* tradition of singing, dancing, and poetry recitation during celebrations that followed major Buddhist temple services (Yoon 2007, 17). At the same time, Kinnara members continued the practice of adding different, non-Japanese musical elements into *wadaiko* compositions, this time including Latin, rock, and funk rhythms. These two approaches would be brought together in San Jose Taiko, a group founded by young community activists based at a Buddhist temple that also studied with Tanaka for a year (and would become the first professional *wadaiko* group in the United States). As a whole, these three groups helped spread *wadaiko* across the United States through workshops and concerts. Meanwhile, their repertoire served as a model followed by others; in addition to using much of the same instrumentation and orchestration practices used by Oguchi Daihachi (brought across the Pacific Ocean by Tanaka), the use of ternary form by these groups proved to be particularly influential.

The advancements in *wadaiko* music made by groups in Japan and the United States from the 1950s through the 1970s were taken in a new direction with the emergence of *wadaiko* solo artists in the 1980s (Chapter 6). Coming out of groups like Ondekoza, Sukeroku Taiko, Kinnara Taiko, and San Francisco Taiko Dojo, Hayashi Eitetsu and Kenny Endo sought different forms

of presentation that could only be accomplished as individuals. Of particular influence was their expansion of the taiko set, a gathering of taiko into a set to be played by a single individual that was first developed by Oguchi Daihachi. Hayashi and Endo created new works that highlighted the taiko set, utilizing assorted instrumentations, musical forms, and performance techniques in original compositions. Their influence would be further felt as a number of other artists left their groups to pursue solo careers.

The exploration of different instrumentation techniques and musical forms by *wadaiko* soloists would serve as inspiration for a new generation of performers that arose in the 1990s (Chapter 7). Groups were created by performers who had been playing since they were children (quite different from their predecessors who had largely come to *wadaiko* as adults). Beyond the emergence of groups at universities in the United States and Japan, there also arose new professional *wadaiko* groups like GOCOO and On Ensemble that created new compositions that also brought in a new range of musical influences, from dance to world beat.

Modern *wadaiko* music envelops a wide range of performance styles. However, despite the chronological presentation of material in this dissertation, it does not mean that performance styles have replaced the previous one. Rather, while new styles emerged, they were presented on the same stage with the old, so that all the styles are being performed by artists today. The Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble from Honolulu, HI, for example, plays the music of Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko, composed in the 1960s and 1970s, as well as more recent compositions by Kenny Endo and other composers that integrate jazz, popular music, and other musical influences.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁴ See, for example, a 2011 performance by the group posted to YouTube. A piece by Kenny Endo, “Clarity,” that utilizes a jazz ternary structure and features melodic instruments was followed by “Misaguchi

8.1.1 Originality in *Wadaiko* Performance

One of the primary factors in the development of *wadaiko* music has been the integration of Japanese festival and theatrical drumming into the compositions. From the beginning of the genre's history, musicians have taken inspiration from older performance traditions. Oguchi Daihachi's "Suwa Ikazuchi" was based on a rhythmic fragment from old festival music (Chapter 2.2), while Sukeroku Taiko's "Midare Uchi" was derived from *bon daiko* drumming (Chapter 3.2.1). This took a different direction when Ondekoza and Kodo began presenting in concert arrangements of regional festival music, such as "Yatai-bayashi" (Chapter 4.2) and "Miyake" (Chapter 4.6.1). Meanwhile, pieces like Kenny Endo's "Symmetrical Soundscapes" (Chapter 6.2.2) and Sukeroku Taiko's "Oroshi Daiko" take inspiration from *hōgaku* (including the direct quoting of rhythms).

Given the inclusion of elements from many different sources, and in occasion the direct quotation of rhythms, the boundary between original and arranged is often ill-defined. At the beginning of their activities, Ondekoza and Kodo credited "Yatai-bayashi" as "Traditional" – indeed, using a transliteration of the English word (*toradishonaru*) rather than the Japanese equivalent – in concert programs and recording liner notes, even though the creation of these works is as much due to the activities of individuals like Hayashi Eitetsu as to the musicians who

Yabusame," by Oguchi Daihachi. This was followed by Endo's "Symmetrical Soundscapes" (discussed in Chapter 6.2.2), Hiroshi Tanaka's "Tatsumaki" (discussed in Chapter 7.1), and finally a piece by Sukeroku Taiko called "Mikoshi Daiko" (modeled after music played during festivals in the Tokyo *Shitamachi* area).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLukv6M-oFg> (accessed February 28, 2013)

have developed the art form over generations in the city of Chichibu.²⁹⁵ Changes in orchestration have been acknowledged at times, such as in a 1985 photo book featuring notes by Kodo group members:

In Kodo's version of the Yatai Bayashi, in order to create the atmosphere of the heavy cart being pulled up a hill, without the benefit of the cart, 3 larger drums, with a deeper voice than those found in Chichibu, are used. The drums are mounted on a special stand requiring them to be played in a half sit-up position which places tremendous demands on the player's strength (Hoshino 1985, 85).

However, no mention was made of the straightening of rhythms, the arrangement of quasi-improvised patterns into a set form, or Hayashi's role in the process (as discussed in Chapter 4.2). Meanwhile, as discussed in Chapter 4.3, "O-daiko" was the result of Hayashi creating new performance practices based on requests by Den Tagayasu; it is an extended improvisation by an individual based on a basic framework laid out by Hayashi. Just as was the case with "Yatai-bayashi" and "Miyake," however, accreditation was given as "Traditional."

Of course, this has changed in recent years, with the composer now listed as "Traditional/Arranged by Kodo." This does not mean, however, that the boundary between original and arranged is any less vague. In a recent publication by Kodo, the origins of "O-daiko" are described as such: "it was based on the drumming we learned from Mr. Shitamura Keiichi from Mikuni-chō in Fukui Prefecture" (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 107). However, as

²⁹⁵ See, for the example, the liner notes of Kodo's 1989 recording "Blessing of the Earth." Kodo, *Blessing of the Earth*, (CBS/Sony Records, 1989), CD, CSCL 1033.

This use of English transliteration will be discussed later in this chapter.

noted in Chapter 4, there is little remaining of this original style (*hi no taiko*). And yet, it is also noted that “the composition of the piece in which a 3-*shaku* 8-*sun* to 4-*shaku*-sized *ō-daiko* is played was devised based on Mr. Den Tagayasu’s direction, with Mr. Hayashi Eitetsu playing a central role” (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 107).²⁹⁶ Thus, while the contributions of Ondekoza/Kodo members in the creation of the piece are acknowledged, “O-daiko” is still listed as being primarily “Traditional/ Arranged by Kodo.”

In concert programs, liner notes, and publications like their 30th Anniversary retrospective, Kodo makes a clear difference between works like “Yatai-bayashi” – full arrangements of regional festival music – and other works that quote from regional traditions on a smaller scale; for example, Leonard Eto’s piece “LION,” composed in 1990, is credited to him even though not only rhythms but also dance movements are taken from a folk dance from Iwate Prefecture (a picture of which is seen in Chapter 4.6.2) (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 108). Kodo is not the only group to do this; even though Sukeroku Taiko’s “Midare Uchi” includes both rhythms and visual elements taken from *bon daiko* (see Chapter 3.2), the composer is listed as Sukeroku Taiko. Similarly, despite extensive quoting from *hōgaku* in the work “Oroshi Daiko” (Chapter 3.4.3.1), the composer is credited as Sukeroku Taiko.

It appears that there is a discrepancy in claims of originality, then, as evidenced in the musical content within compositions. On occasion, composer will claim credit for a work even if

²⁹⁶ *Shaku* and *sun* are older Japanese measuring systems still in use today for taiko. 1 *shaku* is approximately 1 foot (11.93 inches).

The Japanese verb for “devised” in this quotation is “*umidasu*,” which means to bring forth, bear, invent. It has the implication of the creation of something new.

Similar recognition is made in the discussion of “Yatai-bayashi” in the same book.

the contents are not entirely original, but rather have been borrowed from various sources (and has been presented in a manner where the source is clear, as in “Oroshi Daiko”). In other cases, meanwhile, works are described as being arranged even though elements are newly composed (such as “O-daiko”). The vague nature of this recognition of composers and arrangers speaks to a larger question: how does one define originality in regards to musical performance? To what degree can an idea be borrowed and still be considered part of an original piece of music? These questions have been pondered by many scholars; for example, it was at the core of Charles Seeger’s examination of the proliferation of the folk song “Barbara Allen,” when he asked:

How much can two singings differ and still be singings of the same tune? Or, conversely, how little can they vary and still be singings of different tunes?

(Seeger 1977, 275)

Of course, Seeger was dealing with the relationship between text and music, but the topic remains relevant on a broader scale, for it speaks to the manner in which originality is defined within a particular musical culture.

Within the realm of *wadaiko* performance, as demonstrated by the above discussion, the boundaries between an “arranged” work and an “original work” are sometimes blurred with verbal representations of the music by performers. Pieces in which the compositional flow is the same as that performed in original festival music – such as “Yatai-bayashi” and “Miyake” – are listed as “Traditional,” regardless of improvisational elements and any changes made to rhythms during the arrangement. Other pieces that simply quote from *matsuri-bayashi*, meanwhile, are attributed to individual composers. At the same time, the use of “Traditional” in relation to “O-daiko” suggests that this attribution may have nothing to do with musical content, but rather is connected to the particular discourse that a group of performer wishes to put forth; the attribution

of as “O-daiko” fits within Den Tagayasu’s original goal of “revitalizing” Japanese performance traditions.

It is worth noting here that the issue of originality discussed is not necessarily connected to discourses of innovation. At the 2013 East Coast Taiko Conference, Alan Okada asked participants in a discussion panel to comment on the interplay of “tradition and innovation in their music.” In response, Kenny Endo stated that “tradition and innovation are the same thing” (Discussion panel, 2013 East Coast Taiko Conference, February 2, 2013). The “Tradition as a basis for innovation” poster that hangs at Kenny Endo’s Taiko Center of the Pacific, a picture of which can be seen at the end of Chapter 7, is an extension of this, a quotation he attributes to one of his *hōgaku* teachers. As discussed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, tradition in East Asian performance arts is not a static object, but something that is always evolving; Chinese performer Fang Kun noted in 1981 that “traditional music has developed, it has great vitality, it is not static” (Fang, et al. 1981, 6). A performance art is not performed the same way now as it was; indeed, as Creighton notes, the act of learning elements in a musical tradition “implies the possibility of doing something different from now into the future” (Creighton 2007, 223).

When we discuss the conception of a piece as original, highlighting how certain groups list the composer of a work as “Traditional,” this is not a musing on the relationship between tradition and creativity. Rather, these incongruities reveal how performers conceptualize accreditation and acknowledgement of inspiration. However, this process has had an effect on not only the music of *wadaiko* as it spread to the United States, but also to issues of performance rights. Kodo’s copyright management company notes that they have no control over pieces like “Yatai-bayashi” and “Miyake” (discussed in Chapter 4.6.1), as they are “based on traditional arts,” and thus Kodo does not have the authority to grant permissions or authority to perform

(personal communication, November 7, 2012). The description of a piece as “Traditional,” then, is perhaps tied to issues of copyright and authority rather to more immediate musical conceptions of originality.²⁹⁷ However, these questions of performance rights are also tied to particular discourses of tradition and the connection of *wadaiko* to older performance practices that have emerged over the past six decades of *wadaiko* history as the art form has grown interculturally, as well as the intercultural transmission of *wadaiko* knowledge.

8.1.2 “Tradition” in Intercultural *Wadaiko* Performance

While the above discussion has highlighted the nebulous nature of “traditional” in regards to composer attribution in *wadaiko*, tradition has also been invoked in other ways in regards to *wadaiko* performance. Indeed, this process has had a further effect on the issue of performance rights within the genre. Oguchi Daihachi and Osuwa Daiko utilized a discourse of a “revival” (*fukkatsu*) of a local drumming practice as they began activities, a process that has continued to this day (Chapter 2). Even as the group performs original compositions, they uphold the perception that what they are performing is the revival of a once-lost local drumming tradition (“tradition” understood in this context to mean “an inherited body of customs and beliefs”) (Handler and Linnekin 1984, 273). Visual elements like cloth offerings to the gods attached to drums and chanting during a work help to give performances by Osuwa Daiko a sense of

²⁹⁷ Extending this argument further, Kodo’s change from simply “Traditional” to “Traditional/Arranged by Kodo” could be the result of complaints of performers of the original art, as discussed in Chapter 4. This is merely speculation at this moment, of course, but could serve as the foundation for a future study of factors in the evolution of *wadaiko* discourse.

connection to Shinto ritual. In a related practice, the group has maintained a close connection with their local shrine, the Suwa Grand Shrine. The performance of Osuwa Daiko's compositions was not, in Oguchi's eyes, simply a musical presentation, but an offering to the gods, an extension of the rituals that takes place during Shinto festivals. Oguchi went to further lengths to link contemporary *wadaiko* performance with older performance traditions, tying the art form to the war drums of Takeda Shingen, a 16th century warlord (Mogi 2010). Oguchi's emphasis on a historical basis for Osuwa Daiko hearkens back to the statement by Robert Provine discussed in the opening chapter of this dissertation: "history, broadly conceived, is an essential part of the aesthetic of East Asian traditional music" (Provine 2007, 23). By attaching his contemporary style to an older performance tradition, Oguchi was participating in a larger discourse of tradition within East Asian arts, the creation of a particular aesthetic for *wadaiko* performance.

Of course, this was not the only connection of *wadaiko* to older performance traditions to emerge. As they began activities in Tokyo in the 1960s, Sukeroku Taiko maintained a close connection to the *Shitamachi* area from where they arose (Chapter 3). "Midare Uchi" was an arrangement of rhythms and performance practices used in local Obon celebrations. However, at the same time they also linked themselves to a different performance tradition by learning *hōgaku* theatrical music performance techniques and integrating them – along with elements of the music – into their compositions. Indeed, they did not describe themselves as successors of any particular tradition like Oguchi did, so they did not foster a particular discourse describing their music as traditional or a revival.

This discourse of tradition was not only limited to Japan, but had an impact interculturally as well. When Tanaka Seiichi brought over the performance styles of Osuwa

Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko to San Francisco, founding the San Francisco Taiko Doukukai (later the San Francisco Taiko Dojo), he also brought with them the discourses of tradition used by Oguchi (Chapter 5). Indeed, On Ensemble's Shoji Kameda notes that he can remember a time within the American *wadaiko* community "before anyone knew what *wadaiko* was and when everybody thought we were practicing some ancient art form that was used in battles," a result of Tanaka's propagation across the United States of Oguchi's discourses of revival and tradition.²⁹⁸

However, this conception of *wadaiko* as traditional was complicated by the attitude taken by Kinnara Taiko that their musical style was "Japanese American Buddhist taiko."²⁹⁹ Even as they acknowledged a different set of Japanese inspirations for their music – Buddhist *hōraku* – they also maintained that 'Japanese American' *wadaiko* is not necessarily the same as 'Japanese' *wadaiko*. This soon became tied to political movements such as the Asian American movement (discussed in Chapter 5.3), with groups like San Jose Taiko stating they "strive to create new dimensions in Asian American movement and music."³⁰⁰ Kinnara Taiko and San Jose Taiko put forth an emphasis on the American *wadaiko* experience that accompanied Tanaka Seiichi's accenting of connections to Japan as the art form spread across the United States. However, Tanaka took issue with how Kinnara was developing (as discussed in Chapter 5.2.2); according to Kinnara founding member Johnny Mori:

²⁹⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/taikocommunity/permalink/115459805225256/> (accessed December 7, 2012)

²⁹⁹ Johnny Mori. <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/clips/729/> (accessed March 7, 2013)

³⁰⁰ <http://www.taiko.org/history-traditional-japanese-drumming-rhythm-world-beats/> (accessed March 7, 2013)

He wanted to know whether or not Kinnara could not use the word ‘taiko.’... He goes, “Because you guys are not playing taiko. One way, you’re kind of being disrespectful to the drum. What you guys are playing is not taiko. You’re playing on these barrels. What you’re playing is not Japanese traditional rhythms. Nothing about it is Japanese.”³⁰¹

Tanaka’s request suggests a conception of authenticity based on a connection to Japan, one that has been contested by some performers in the United States.³⁰²

Meanwhile, newer groups like GOCOO and On Ensemble have taken one step further the intentional separation of “American *wadaiko*” from “Japanese *wadaiko*” embraced by Kinnara Taiko. By embracing terms like “band” and “fusion” in the descriptions of their music, the groups created by this younger generation of performers have sought to separate themselves from the standard mode of presentation used by most *wadaiko* groups. From this perspective, *wadaiko* performance traditions include not only festival and theatrical music but also *wadaiko* music as it has developed over the past six decades.

8.1.3 The Intercultural Transmission of *Wadaiko* and *Wadaiko* Knowledge

The idea of tradition in *wadaiko* performance is an issue that is constantly being renegotiated, affected by the continued movement of artists between the two countries. While *wadaiko* has been affected by intercultural musical flows from its very beginning, it has also been impacted by the movement of artists between Japan and the United States. Oguchi Daihachi had an direct

³⁰¹ <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/clips/729/> (accessed March 7, 2013)

³⁰² This issue will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

impact on the growth of *wadaiko* in the United States – beyond teaching Tanaka Seiichi (as discussed in Chapter 5.1), he helped to found the group St. Louis Osuwa Taiko in 1986, part of a sister-city relation between St. Louis and the Japanese city of Suwa (where Osuwa Daiko is based).³⁰³ Sukeroku Taiko was also active on the intercultural scene from an early period, having toured the United States with a singer in 1968; it was this tour that led to the composition of “Yodan Uchi,” as members worked to create a piece that would look good in a venue where the performers were surrounded by the audience (Chapter 3.5). Additionally, it was on this tour that Sukeroku Taiko members met Tanaka Seiichi and taught him the basics of the Sukeroku style; they also left a set of drums with him that helped bolster the activities of the new San Francisco Taiko Doukougai. Even today, Sukeroku Taiko has had an impact on the intercultural nature of the art form. Several groups that have emerged from the original group – including Kobayashi Seido’s Oedo Sukeroku Taiko and Amanojaku, a group founded by another former member of Sukeroku Taiko – have toured the United States several times in recent decades.

Meanwhile, Ondekoza and Kodo have influenced the growth of *wadaiko* of the United States through workshops conducted as they tour around the nation. Kodo has had an additionally, more immediate organizational impact on the growth of the art form in the United States, first with the short-lived organization Kodo America, and later through Kodo Arts Sphere America, “a United States public benefit nonprofit corporation established to encourage, enable and support programs and opportunities for North Americans to study and understand the traditional and contemporary Japanese music of the taiko and its related performing arts.”³⁰⁴

³⁰³ <http://www.stltaiko.com/aboutus.php> (accessed February 28, 2013)

³⁰⁴ <http://www.kodo.or.jp/kasa/mission/mission.html> (Accessed November 9, 2012)

These Japan-centric flows – that is, Japanese artists traveling to the United States – began to change in the 1980s, when former Kinnara Taiko and San Francisco Taiko Dojo member Kenny Endo travelled to Japan to study *wadaiko* and *hōgaku* performance (Chapter 6). Before embarking on his solo career, Endo performed with Osuwa Daiko, Sukeroku Taiko, and Oedo Sukeroku Taiko. At the same time, he helped to enhance intercultural relationships by serving as a middleman for the acquisition of Japanese-made drums and other *wadaiko* equipment for groups in the United States.

The generation of *wadaiko* performers that emerged in the 1990s followed the model for intercultural activities set by their predecessors. Many performers in the United States have followed Kenny Endo's model of travelling to Japan to study not only *wadaiko* but also *hōgaku* and regional festival music, including the members of On Ensemble (Chapter 7.3). Meanwhile, GOCOO is active on the intercultural scene, performing not just in the United States but across Europe as well (following a precedent set by Ondekoza and Kodo).³⁰⁵ These groups have helped to further encourage intercultural exchange between groups in Japan and the United States, and helped to nurture the relationships created by those that came before.

Today, there is constant interaction between *wadaiko* performers in Japan and the United States. Many Americans have followed Kenny Endo's example in travelling to Japan and becoming members of groups there. Kodo's membership has included two American performers, Leonard Eto and Kaoru Watanabe. Meanwhile, the second incarnation of Ondekoza (see Chapter 4.5) has included amongst its numbers American performers Art Lee, Kelvin Underwood, and

³⁰⁵ The emergence of *wadaiko* in Europe is a development worth further examination, but rests outside the scope of this dissertation.

Tiffany Tamaribuchi. Further, Tokyo-based Sukeroku-style group Amanojaku counts former Denver Taiko and Kenny Endo Taiko ensemble Chris Holland among its performing members.

However, the intercultural nature of *wadaiko* is not only limited to performance groups. Indeed, in recent years there has been a growth in intercultural *wadaiko* education. Once Kenny Endo returned to the United States in 1990, he founded the Taiko Center of the Pacific in Honolulu, HI. At this school, he offers a teaching environment modeled after the classes taught by members of Oedo Sukeroku Taiko and those by Tosha Kiyonari at the Nihon Taiko Dojo (personal interview, June 29, 2010).³⁰⁶ Endo's model of establishing a school upon his return to the United States has been followed by other artists. In 2006, Kaoru Watanabe founded the Kaoru Watanabe Taiko Center in New York, where he teaches the style of performance he learned as a Kodo member (the first to teach this style in the United States). Additionally, Tateishi Ringtaro – a former member of Ondekoza who came to the United States in 2002, first performing with the group Maturiza in Orlando, Florida – opened The School of Taiko in Seattle in 2009, where he teaches an Ondekoza-inspired performance style.³⁰⁷

Intercultural *wadaiko* education is also a factor in Japan. Sukeroku Taiko founding member Tosha Kiyonari founded the Nihon Taiko Dojo in the 1990s, currently based at the studio of the Miyamoto Unosuke Shōten drum company in Tokyo. Additionally, Oedo Sukeroku Taiko regularly teaches classes in Tokyo. These schools have regularly included among their students performers from the United States, introduced to the Japanese schools by Tanaka Seiichi, Kenny Endo, and others.

³⁰⁶ He was also influenced by his experiences learning from Tanaka Seiichi in San Francisco in the 1970s

³⁰⁷ <http://www.japantaiko.com/about.html> (accessed December 7, 2012)

And yet, the flow of performers in recent years has been from the United States to Japan, with Tateishi being one of the few Japanese performers to come to the United States, resulting in an imbalance of sorts. Japan is seen as a place to learn, while the United States is a place for people to perform. This could be regarded as a reaction to the fact that Japan remains the primary center of *wadaiko* performance (perhaps natural, given that it is the art form's place of origin), and thus has been affected by Tanaka Seiichi's considerations of a connection to Japan as the basis for proper *wadaiko* performance. It is left to see whether this will balance out in the future, with more Japanese artists coming to the United States to establish teaching studios.³⁰⁸

This intercultural movement of artists and *wadaiko* knowledge between Japan and the United States has in recent years been complimented by the rise of the North America Taiko Conference (NATC), a bi-annual gathering of performers that is called "the largest gathering of taiko practitioners in the world."³⁰⁹ The first NATC was first held at the Japanese-American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC) in Los Angeles in 1997.³¹⁰ It was the culmination of many years of planning, the result of many attempts to bring together *wadaiko* performers from across the United States and Canada. Foundations for such an event were first laid in the mid-1970s, when the first joint concert was held between San Francisco Taiko Dojo, San Jose Taiko, and Los Angeles's Kinnara Taiko, the first three *wadaiko* groups in the United States.

³⁰⁸ There are hints that this may be happening, with an early 2013 announcement by Japanese taiko manufacturer Asano Taiko that it will be opening a store and *wadaiko* school in Los Angeles. <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/01/23/national/taiko-firm-drums-up-popularity-within-u-s/#.UTkHTIfahis> (accessed March 7, 2013)

³⁰⁹ <http://www.taikoconference.org/about-natc> (accessed December 4, 2012)

³¹⁰ <http://www.taikoconference.org/about-natc> (accessed February 21, 2013)

Meanwhile, in 1979, a gathering of groups based at Buddhist churches was held at the Hongan-ji Buddhist temple in Los Angeles.

Additional foundations for the get-together that was to become the North American Taiko Conference were laid in the mid-1980s with the foundation of Kodo America.³¹¹ According to Roy Hirabayashi, a member of the NATC Executive Committee and early participant in Kodo America, Kodo staff and prominent members of the North American *wadaiko* community at the time had discussions about holding some sort of gathering (personal interview, November 3, 2011). However, when Kawaguchi Yoshio passed away and Kodo America folded, that idea was momentarily set aside.

In the mid-1990s, Duane Ebata, who had been part of the Kodo America discussions and eventually became managing director of the JACCC, suggested that the time was right to resurrect the plans for a taiko conference.³¹² The first conference was held in 1997; according to Hirabayashi, they thought “it was going to be a one-time thing,” but the weekend of events was an overwhelming success, and a decision was made to hold the conference every other year (personal interview, November 3, 2011). The first three conferences were held at the JACCC’s facilities in Los Angeles’s Little Tokyo area, with the cooperation of local organizations, including the Japanese American National Museum. In 2003, it moved outside Los Angeles for the first time, and was held in Sacramento. This began a pattern of alternating between Los

³¹¹ See Chapter 5.4

³¹² This was partially inspired by a yearly gathering of collegiate *wadaiko* groups that began in 1995. Workshop leaders were brought in from across the country, including Kenny Endo, Roy and PJ Hirabayashi, Alan Okada, and Russel Baba and Jeanne Mercer of Shasta Taiko.

Angeles and another site on the West Coast; the conference was in Seattle in 2007 and at Stanford University – south of San Francisco – in 2011.

NATC offers workshops, discussion panels, and concerts for participants who come from across the world. The majority of workshop leaders are members of North American *wadaiko* groups, spanning several generations of performers, but an increasing number of instructors have come from Japan. Indeed, NATC is not only a reflection of the growth of the art form across the continent but on an intercultural level as well. According to former conference coordinator Bryan Yamami, one of the original objectives of the conference was to “continue to maintain and expand the relationship with taiko in Japan” (Yamami 2001, 18). Workshop leaders at the 2011 conference included Mochizuki Saburo, Kageyama Isaku (Amanojaku, from Tokyo), Suzuki Kyosuke (Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, as well as the Wakayama performance troupe), Tateishi Ringtaro (formerly of Ondekoza), and Fujimoto Yoko (Kodo); past conferences, meanwhile, have hosted Kobayashi Seido (Sukeroku Taiko/Oedo Sukeroku Taiko) and Fujimoto Yoshikazu (Kodo), among others.

The intercultural nature of NATC can also be found in the Taiko Marketplace, a showroom where assorted vendors offer wares for purchase. Japanese vendors have a large presence at the conference, with taiko manufacturers Miyamoto Unosuke Shōten and Asano Taiko both occupying a large part of the floor space.³¹³ These companies have had a large presence from the beginning of the conference’s history. According to Miyamoto Unosuke

³¹³ This is partially due to the relationship between these groups and several groups in the United States. Kenny Endo is sponsored by Miyamoto Unosuke Shōten, as is On Ensemble. Asano Taiko, meanwhile, has provided drums to the Los Angeles-based professional *wadaiko* group TAIKOPROJECT.

Shōten company president Miyamoto Yoshihiko, NATC offers the opportunity to interact and build relationships with North American groups (personal interview, December 6, 2011).³¹⁴

Performers can get intensive exposure to regional drumming styles at NATC that otherwise would be impossible unless they travelled to Japan. Workshop topics have included several regional festival drumming styles made famous by Ondekoza and Kodo – including *Chichibu Yatai-bayashi* and festival drumming from the islands of Miyake and Hachijo – as well as lesser known styles like the *Kiriko Taiko* style from the Noto peninsula in Western Japan.³¹⁵ The conference, then, is a primary site for the transmission of knowledge about not just *wadaiko* but also a broader range of Japanese drumming traditions, expanding the breadth of knowledge available to performers in the United States beyond what might be available to them via individual groups.

As a result of the offerings of NATC, performers in the United States have brought in a wider range of styles into their compositions. Just as Stanford Taiko brought a “Miyake” influence into their drumming with “Tatsumaki” (see Chapter 7.1), other pieces have integrated a larger range of festival drumming styles from Japan, including “Yatai-bayashi” and a style of drumming from the island of Hachijō.³¹⁶ However, this has only served to continue to further

³¹⁴ Indeed, he and other individuals from Japan note that there is not a Japanese equivalent to NATC. Thus, it functions on a larger global level as a primary event for those interested in *wadaiko* performance.

³¹⁵ *Kiriko Taiko* is a style in which “the taiko is played in an upright position, usually with two people (or up to five people) on a single taiko drum.” <http://wkdhozonkai.com/aboutus.html> (accessed March 7, 2013)

³¹⁶ This process is already widespread in Japan, with artists performing a variety of styles on the same concert in the style of Ondekoza/Kodo. A concert by Japanese soloists Kato Takumi and Shiobara Ryo at Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania, on April 22, 2009, for example, featured an *ō-daiko* solo in the style of “O-daiko,” “Miyake,” and a version of “Yatai-bayashi.” While this concert was partially influenced by the

complicate the issues of performance rights hinted at earlier in this chapter, with ideas of “originality” becomes tied to copyright.

8.1.4 *Wadaiko* Performance Rights & Authority

In 1999, a letter was sent by sent by Sukeroku Taiko founding member Kobayashi Seido to be read to attendees of that year’s North American Taiko Conference in Los Angeles. In the letter, Kobayashi asked “that groups which play Oedo Sukeroku Daiko's repertoire without permission stop doing so” (Leong 1999).³¹⁷ His request was prompted by his discovery that a video was being sold by an American group featuring a performance of the piece “Yodan Uchi,” created in the late 1960s by Sukeroku Taiko (Yoon 2007, 43). However, a second letter soon followed containing “specific guidelines stipulating how Sukeroku’s repertoire and distinctive *chudaiko* stand were now to be used” (Wong 2005, 85). This letter asked for groups in the United States to not only stop playing the works of Sukeroku Taiko without permission, but also stop using the slanted *naname* stands created by Sukeroku Taiko that place a *nagadō-daiko* at a 45-degree angle.

performance history of Kato who trained in Kodo’s apprenticeship program, this mixture can be found in the activities of other Japanese groups as well.

³¹⁷ Unfortunately, I have not been able to obtain a full copy of the original letter. David Leong previously hosted a copy of the letter as part of a discussion of Oedo Sukeroku Taiko his Rolling Thunder website, but the link on the letter is now broken. http://www.taiko.com/taiko_resource/history/oedo_faq.html (accessed March 7, 2013)

However, Deborah Wong includes translations of excerpts of the letter in a 2005 publication. Wong, "Noisy Intersection: Ethnicity, Authenticity and Ownership in Asian American Taiko."

To some degree, this was prompted by initiatives taken by Kobayashi in Japan to claim a copyright on these stands. Leong notes that in the late 1980s Kobayashi applied for a design patent on the Sukeroku slant stand as well as a type of *ō-daiko* stand created and used by the group (Leong 1999). However, in his 1999 article Leong notes that the difference between a “design patent” and a copyright is vague:

What Oedo Sukeroku have been granted is a "design patent." Meaning they are not claiming that they invented the stand rather they are claiming that shape of the stand is "Sukeroku stand." In Japan, apparently a design patent has limited duration of 14 years after it is granted. So the validity of the patent will expire in 2003. What specific protections the "design patent" gives Oedo Sukeroku under Japanese law is unclear at this time.

Although the stands were likely invented in the early 1960's, the patents were applied for in 1987 by Seido Kobayashi, and were granted by the Japanese government in 1989. This raises some serious legal issues on makers who were producing this stand before the patent was granted: If a maker can show they were producing the stand before the patent was granted (under US law) those companies probably have the right to continue to make (and profit from) the Sukeroku design. (Leong 1999)

Setting aside the vague nature of Kobayashi's copyright claim, his letter to the North American Taiko Conference seemed to link the stands and the music, suggesting an approach to originality in *wadaiko* that was not only limited to musical sound, but also to the visual elements of a performance as well. As described by Deborah Wong, Kobayashi asked players to stop

playing the *dageikyoku* of Sukeroku Taiko, a term used to describe “the interlinked nature of repertoire, stand and *kata*” (Wong 2005, 85).³¹⁸ She provides the definition of the term as given by Kobayashi in his letter:

Dageikyoku: All the music by O-Edo Sukeroku Daiko which is played with the ‘Folding Tilted Stand ©’, the ‘Assembling Odaiko Stand ©’, and performing with ‘diagonal beating and choreography.’ It also includes the compositions (Shiraume, matsuri, Nidan-Uchi, Yodan-Uchi, etc.) created by the artistic director, Seido and other original members. All these compositions are played with the specific style of Taiko, the Sukeroku style. Therefore, it is impossible to play this music unless the players have mastered the basics of Sukeroku method. (Wong 2005, 85-86)³¹⁹

As described by Soh Daiko (New York) founder and NATC Executive Committee member Alan Okada at the 2013 East Coast Taiko Conference at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, this letter was a bit of a surprise to attendees of the conference. As he stated in his 2013 opening keynote lecture:

³¹⁸ Given the inability to consult the original text, it is unclear what a literal translation of this word might be.

³¹⁹ This approach to originality – linking kinesthetic elements to musical ones – is not new to the examination of a musical art; Bell Yung offers in his study of the Chinese *qin* an argument that an examination of that zither must take into account visual and kinesthetic components as well as aural ones Bell Yung, "Choreographic and Kinesthetic Elements in Performance on the Chinese Seven-String Zither," *Ethnomusicology* 28, no. 3 (1984)..³¹⁹ However, it is unclear as to the degree that this perspective is held by *wadaiko* performers beyond Kobayashi.

This was a wakeup call to American taiko groups, who were playing what they considered to be traditional music, not thinking that some of this is contemporary music written by people who feel a proprietary interest in it (Alan Okada, keynote lecture, 2013 East Coast Taiko Conference, February 2, 2013).

Kobayashi's letter ignited a series of debates concerning originality, copyright, and performance rights. Deborah Wong notes that the movement of repertoire between groups in the United States was for a time rather informal: "ideally, a group would ask permission of the composer of a piece before learning it, especially if it meant to learn it from a recording or second-hand, from a composer's student, but that was essentially the extent to which repertoire was considered ownable" (Wong 2005, 85). When Ondekoza (and later Kodo) came to the United States and began presenting pieces like "Yatai-bayashi" as "Traditional" – that is, not original works – many American groups began playing these works, learning first by attending concerts and eventually by listening and watching records. At the same time, these groups further a particular discourse of tradition connected to these pieces. They did not know that they had been arranged by Ondekoza and Kodo members for stage performance, but rather believed that they were presented in the same way as they were in their native regions. As such, not only did the lines between traditional and original in *wadaiko* performance continue to blur, but the idea of performance rights was problematized. In time, the repertoire of groups in the United States included more and more pieces created by groups in Japan, performed both with and without permission.

Some of the opposition to Kobayashi's request spawned from the requirements he put on the ability to play Sukeroku pieces and use the Sukeroku slanted *naname* stands. As conveyed by David Leong, the authorization was:

... granted to individuals, rather than groups. If a performer is authorized to play Dageikyoku (Oedo Sukeroku Daiko repertoire), they can teach it to the students in their own taiko group in order to perform the repertoire. However, those students, even though they have been taught Oedo Sukeroku Daiko repertoire by an authorized performer, do not inherit the ability to play or teach Oedo Sukeroku Daiko repertoire if they leave the authorized performers' taiko group. These student [sic] would have to get authorization for themselves to play the repertoire. (Leong 1999)

At the same time, as noted by Deborah Wong, performers had to “be registered with ‘Sukerokuryu Kai’ in order to use the Dageikyoku of O-Edo Sukeroku Daiko,” requiring a registration fee of “\$1,200 per year (per group or per person)” and royalties of “7% of the proceeds per performance” (Wong 2005, 86).

The monetary element of Kobayashi’s request was perhaps the most shocking to American performers, but it is not something unheard of in Japan. Indeed, the use of the term “ryū” in Kobayashi’s letter is telling, as it is a term that is often used in relation to the Japanese *iemoto* system, an artistic social system in which “teachers and students belong to groups which are modeled after the traditional Japanese family unit and extended family” (Reed and Locke 1983, 20). The term “-ryū,” added after a name, is used to signify different performance families.

The phrase “Sukeroku-ryū” is often used in regards to the style of drumming created by Sukeroku Taiko; Mochizuki Saburo, for example, describes the *bon daiko* drumming style showcased by the group in “Midare Uchi” as the “basis of the Sukeroku-ryū drumming style” (personal communication, December 2012). The *iemoto* system dictates both performance

practice and repertoire, creating a relatively codified manner of performance. At the same time, it combines copyright and performance rights, dictating who is allowed to perform a piece.

However, Kobayashi's evocation of the *iemoto* system is problematic. Normally the system has at its top has a single person (called the *iemoto*) (Reed and Locke 1983, 20). The Sukeroku-ryū lacks this singular figure; instead, there is the group of original Sukeroku Taiko members, each of whom has a slightly different approach to the art form (and to ideas like permissions). According to Kenny Endo, the other original members of Sukeroku Taiko did not have the same concerns as those expressed by Kobayashi when he sent the letter to the North American Taiko Conference. Meanwhile, each has developed their own performance technique; the style used by Kobayashi and Oedo Sukeroku Taiko is different from that taught by Tosha Kiyonari at Nihon Taiko Dojo.³²⁰ Further, the *iemoto* includes a system of giving performance names once you reach a particular level; this does not exist in connection to the Sukeroku style of *wadaiko*.

It is unclear the effect that Kobayashi's letter had on the development of new *wadaiko* repertoire in the United States, as evidenced by the work "Many Sides," written by members of the group TAIKOPROJECT.³²¹ The work is a clear variation of "Yodan Uchi," combining both performance practices – including the use of an *ō-daiko* flanked by *nagadō-daiko* on *naname* slanted stands – and musical content, both in terms of the tripled-based rhythmic feel and the rhythms used in performance. However, the piece is alternately listed as being composed by Masato Baba (in the liner notes for the group's 2008 live DVD) or arranged by Baba (on the

³²⁰ Tosha's stance and hitting technique are different from that used by Kobayashi.

³²¹ A video of this work has been uploaded by TAIKOPROJECT to the group's YouTube account. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYDChAxHRrk> (accessed February 26, 2013).

YouTube page) (TAIKOPROJECT 2008). The one variation from “Yodan Uchi” found in this piece is the inclusion of more drums to be played by soloists. Of course, this is not a new development, as both San Francisco Taiko Dojo and Soh Daiko have a version of “Yodan Uchi” called “Hachidan” and “Hachidan-Uchi” (respectively) in which three larger *byō-uchi-daiko*, set upon stands that lay them parallel to the floor and at approximately eye level, are placed in between two *nagadō-daiko* on slanted *naname* stands. Soh Daiko gives the composers of the piece as Jennifer Wada and Peter Wong, while program notes for a performance by the group at the 2011 North American Taiko Conference Taiko Jam concert shed further light on the development of the work:

Hachidan-Uchi is based on the piece, *Yodan-Uchi* (hitting 4 sides of the drum), which was created by Sukeroku Taiko and developed to its full form by Oedo Sukeroku Taiko of Tokyo. Tanaka-Sensei of the San Francisco Taiko Dojo taught elements of *Yodan-Uchi* to Soh Daiko in the early 1980s. Jennifer Wada and Peter Wong, adding New York sensibility to the music, expanded the composition from three to five drums, making *Hachidan-Uchi* one of Soh Daiko’s signature contemporary taiko pieces that integrates movement between, and playing on, multiple drums. ("Program Notes for 'Taiko Jam '11" 2011)

The story of “Hachidan-Uchi” found in these program notes demonstrates not only the complicated nature of attributing compositional credit in *wadaiko* performance, but also the way that performers mediate the nature of originality in the art form. A work is attributed to individual composers, even if it recognized as being “based” on another work by a different group.

In recent years there have been pieces composed by American artists directly in response to these issues of originality and performance rights. One of the most prominent is “Omiyage” (“Gift”), written by On Ensemble member Kameda Shoji when he was also with the group TAIKOPROJECT. As the name of the piece suggests, the piece is meant as a ‘gift’ for *wadaiko* players, described in notes included with the notation of the piece as “a celebration of the love of taiko, the excitement of seeing taiko for the first time, and the open, sharing attitude that is North American Taiko.” Groups are free to play the piece and share it with others to play, as long as proper credit is given. The fact that notation exists for “Omiyage” perhaps speaks to the role that the fundamentally oral nature of *wadaiko* has influenced this discussion. The majority of *wadaiko* repertoire is not written down. Given that it is largely orally transmitted, this feeds misunderstandings about compositional credit, the negotiation of originality, and performance rights. However, this process has also been influenced by another force that has helped guide the continued intercultural development of *wadaiko*: the issue of language and the manner in which *wadaiko* knowledge has been mediated.

8.2 LANGUAGE AND THE MEDIATION OF WADAIKO KNOWLEDGE

An examination of *wadaiko* as an intercultural entity, such as the approach I have taken in this dissertation, is inevitably affected by the fact that the scholar must deal with both English and Japanese sources. Indeed, one of the primary reasons for the limited geographic scope of Taiko Studies discussed in Chapter 1.4.2.1 – that is, the limitation of studies to either Japan or the United States – is language. The fact that few studies have been written in English on *wadaiko* in Japan is due to the reality that few scholars in the United States who deal with the

subject speak Japanese. As a result, there is a wealth of information about *wadaiko*'s history in the United States, but comparatively little in English on the art form as it exists in Japan. Consequently, performers must be able to speak and/or read Japanese in order to access information (a problem lamented to me by Tiffany Tamaribuchi in a November 2011 interview).

There have been some initiatives in the United States to address this gap in information. One of the most prominent was the website Taiko.com (otherwise known by the name "Rolling Thunder"), created by David Leong and his wife Yuko as a way to share information about *wadaiko*.³²² This English-language website combined a web-based store offering instruments imported from Japan with an information resource center. Leong and the other site developers brought together a wealth of material. The glossary, bibliography, and discography were at the time the most comprehensive resources on the Internet; in addition, the website featured a group database, recording reviews, artist interviews, and other items. Rolling Thunder also offered an e-mail newsletter and hosted a mailing list to foster communication between *wadaiko* performers. Unfortunately, in the early parts of the first decade of the 21st Century the website stopped being updated due to health issues among the administrators. Once this occurred, performers in the United States lost one of their primary sources of *wadaiko* information derived from Japanese language materials.

³²² The website went through several design changes over the years, and unfortunately some of the material offered has been lost. However, a large portion of the website's "Taiko Resource" section is still present on the current version that remains on the internet. <http://www.taiko.com/index.php> (accessed December 6, 2012)

That is not to say that there is currently no English-language site for the discussion of *wadaiko* performance.³²³ Indeed, the means to fill the gap left by Taiko.com emerged in 2010, when popular social networking site Facebook introduced a Groups function that allowed for the creation of discussion groups.³²⁴ On Ensemble member Shoji Kameda created the “North American Taiko Community” group on October 18, 2010, with the initial idea that it would be a place for *wadaiko* performers to remain in contact with each other in the time in between NATC meetings (hence the Facebook group name – in acronym, NATC).³²⁵ It was immediately popular, soon reaching over a thousand members; people shared events, website links, and performance practice information. However, it became apparent that the group was gathering a crowd from outside North America as well, and some began to question potential restrictions suggested by the naming of the group.³²⁶ At the end of August 2011, after 663 individual posts, a new group simply entitled “Taiko Community” was created.³²⁷ As of April 14, 2013, the group has 2,205 members, with more joining every day. In the spirit of the new, more inclusive name, discussion group membership includes not just people from the United States and Canada, but also from Japan, Hong Kong, Argentina, England, France, and many other countries, reflecting the worldwide spread of *wadaiko*.

³²³ At the same time, it must be noted that as far as I am aware there is no similar discussion board in Japanese. Thus, the English-language scope of this discussion is a direct reflection of the forums for the mediation and transmission of *wadaiko* information on the Internet.

³²⁴ <https://blog.facebook.com/blog.php?post=434700832130> (accessed February 21, 2013)

³²⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/taiko/> (accessed December 6, 2012)

³²⁶ This debate was influenced by the fact that a counterpart ‘International Taiko Community’ page had also been created.

³²⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/taikocommunity/> (accessed December 6, 2012)

Performance and workshop information is regularly posted on the group, as well as anything else that group members feel might be of interest. It has also become a site for the discussion of more abstract issues relevant to *wadaiko* performance. One early example that demonstrated the capabilities of the Facebook group to support more in-depth conversations occurred in November 2010, with an early topic about terminology for the slanted stand developed by Sukeroku Taiko.³²⁸ Involved parties included performers with experience in both the United States and Japan, who discussed not only the different names for the stand but the various factors that have influenced the spread of the various terminologies. This thread demonstrated the capabilities of the Facebook group to tackle larger issues than event information dissemination; it was particularly relevant as it allowed any interested party to interact with performers with whom they might otherwise be unable to engage in conversation.

However, the Taiko Community discussion group is a primarily English-language forum. Many of the topics have revealed a gap in knowledge amongst performers in the United States derived by the inability to access Japanese materials. And yet, when more complex topics of relevance to *wadaiko* performance have emerged, from repertoire performance rights to the relationship to between innovation and tradition (that is, the topics discussed in this chapter), artists who rarely post in the group often engage in the discussion, typically to contribute a Japan-focused viewpoint otherwise lacking in the conversations. Performers like Kenny Endo, Shoji Kameda, Kaoru Watanabe, and Tiffany Tamaribuchi have contributed to historical discussions; these individuals all can speak Japanese and have experiences performing in Japan, and thus have a different perspective on *wadaiko* than the majority of English-speaking users of

³²⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/taiko/?view=permalink&id=142488519136157> (accessed December 6, 2012)

the forum. Similarly, the discussions have also routinely involved people in Japan that speak English, like Miyamoto Yoshihiko of the Miyamoto Unosuke Shōten and assorted members of Kodo and Ondekoza staff.³²⁹

The majority of *wadaiko* knowledge has been brought back from Japan to the United States by Japanese expatriates like Tanaka Seiichi or those who speak Japanese and have spent time in Japan, like Kenny Endo and Kaoru Watanabe (who offer training in *hōgaku* and *matsuri-bayashi* performance practices) in their schools alongside *wadaiko*. The mediation of information about *wadaiko* has been directly affected by the fact that there are two different languages used to communicate by performers in Japan and the United States. The ability to speak Japanese and access Japanese materials places individuals in a position of power, allowing them to serve as primary mediators for *wadaiko* knowledge.

Even the North American Taiko Conference is affected by these language barriers. The majority of NATC attendees do not speak Japanese, and many of the artists who come from Japan do not speak in English. Thus, a translator is typically required in order to facilitate workshops. Such as the case for the 2012 Summer Taiko Intensive with Suzuki Kyosuke, in which students learned the fundamentals of the *Edo Kotobuki Jishi* lion dance. Suzuki was assisted by a small group of native English speakers who had studied with him in Tokyo.³³⁰ In

³²⁹ At the same time, United States-based Japanese performers like Kageyama Isaku and Tateishi Ryutaro contribute much to these conversations.

³³⁰ Several of these assistances, perhaps not coincidentally, were former members of the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble, owing both to Suzuki's collaborations with Endo and a relationship between the two dating back to Endo's time in Tokyo with Oedo Sukeroku Taiko and the Wakayama performance troupe.

The Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble has historically sported a larger number of Japanese expatriates than other groups, as has the San Francisco Taiko Dojo. While this likely has to do with the locations – Honolulu and San

such instances (and others across the United States, such as Kodo's workshop tours), knowledge about *wadaiko* is transmitted via the English language. There is the potential for misunderstanding, the misrepresentation of information, or the omission of details based on the abilities of the translator. Indeed, I can speak to several instances when I have been in a workshop with a Japanese-speaking workshop leader and a translator, when I noticed that the translator was not giving as much information as the workshop leader was providing.

This affects not only the transmission of musical knowledge, but also the broader discourses surveyed in this dissertation. Kodo uses a transliteration of the English word for tradition (*toradishonaru*) even in Japanese-language materials; however, it is unclear the reasons why they chose this term instead of a Japanese equivalent. In other materials, such as a profile on the group on its official Japanese language website, a native term for traditional (*dentō-teki*) is used where the term is used in the English version of the profile (the two are nearly identical in content).³³¹ Perhaps the process has more to do with the process of attribution, modeled after English-language practices of listing the composer of a piece as "Traditional" when there is no single contributor but rather has developed over time. As such, this could suggest an alternative reading of the use of the term in regards to pieces like "Yatai-bayashi," one that acknowledges the regional festival music origins of the piece while also recognizing the contributions of various people in the process of creating an arrangement of the stage. Such a perspective would fit within folklorist Henry Glassie's definition of tradition as a "volitional, temporal action" (Glassie 1995, 409). At the same time, it hearkens back to anthropologist Millie Crieghton's

Francisco having large Japanese populations – but I suggest that it may also be related to the intercultural relationships established by these artists, as they have close ties to the various Sukeroku-affiliated groups in Tokyo.

³³¹ http://www.kodo.or.jp/general/index_ja.html (accessed March 7, 2013)

statement that the act of learning elements of a tradition “embraces the creative and generative possibilities of tradition, and proclaims tradition to be alive and have the capacity to incorporate change and innovation” (Creighton 2007, 223).

Meanwhile, the issues of performance rights discussed in this chapter are immediately related to linguistic concerns. Kodo has on its English-language website a page about “Using Kodo music,” on which they note that “Copyrighted pieces written by former and present Kodo members are managed and published by Otodaiku, Ltd. (a Kodo Group company).”³³² Interested parties are directed to the Otodaiku website, where composer information and other details are given. However, this website is in Japanese only. English speakers interested in this information have to find an alternative way of contacting the group.

Similarly, the debate created by Kobayashi Seido’s letter is also immediately affected in linguistic concerns. As of the 1999 writing of David Leong’s document of frequently accessed questions about Oedo Sukeroku Taiko, there were only four known ‘authorized’ performers of Oedo Sukeroku Taiko repertoire: Kenny Endo, Tiffany Tamaribuchi, Tanaka Seiichi, and Ishikura Takemasa of the group Maturiza (from Orlando, Florida – Ishikura is the younger brought of Sukeroku Taiko founding member Ishikura Yoshihisa) (Leong 1999).³³³ The fact that these individuals can speak Japanese is of immediate relevance; in a discussion about Sukeroku repertoire, Kenny Endo noted: “When I want to get approval for anything Sukeroku related, I try and contact all four original members so there [are] no bad feelings later” (personal

³³² http://www.kodo.or.jp/inquiry/copyright_en.html (accessed March 7, 2013)

³³³ Meanwhile, in a 2004 publication, Deborah Wong notes that Tanaka is “Sukeroku’s official representative in the U.S.” Deborah Wong, *Speak It Louder: Asian Americans Making Music* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 204.

communication, August 28, 2012). The inability of musicians in the United States to communicate in such a fashion with Kobayashi and the other founders of Sukeroku Taiko has the potential to lead to misinformation and misunderstandings, resulting in occasions such as the letter sent to the 1999 North American Taiko Conference.

The continued intercultural development of *wadaiko*, then, is immediately affected by the use of two languages within the genre. Indeed, the linguistic problems discussed in the previous pages, as well as the rather one-way flows of people discussed in the first part of the chapter, complicates the idea of *wadaiko* as an intercultural musical genre. As has been demonstrated in this dissertation there have been constant musical flows between Japan and the United States – *wadaiko* repertoire has been influenced as much as Japanese musical practices as by ones that originated in the United States. However, it is difficult to say whether there is an intercultural discourse (or discourses) within *wadaiko*. Many of the representations of tradition by Japanese artists discussed above have made their way to the West, but the reverse has not happened.

And yet, the growth of *wadaiko* in the United States has had impact on the performance of the art form in Japan. As discussed in Chapter 5, Ondekoza was greatly influenced by their first encounter with San Jose Taiko in 1977:

When we saw their performance for the first time, with their bright, carefree, and expressions overflowing with joy that was the complete opposite of us who were simply devoted to pursuing a straight line to our goals, it had a huge impact on the members; at the same time, we felt a deep sense of relief. (Kodo Cultural Foundation 2011, 96).

In an interview for the Japanese-American National Museum's Big Drum *wadaiko* exhibition, Kodo member Saito Eiichi stated:

Now, there are times when Kodo is smiling when it is hitting the drum, but at that time, no one smiled at all. It wasn't a rule, but it was our style. (*Big Drum: Taiko in the United States* 2005)

From this perspective, then, intercultural relationships within *wadaiko* have at times transcended the limits of language, helping to guide the continued evolution of the art form. It has evolved due to the continued interaction, both musical and otherwise, between artists in Japan and the United States, resulting in a intercultural musical genre that is not tied to a single country, but exists in a space beyond the borders of nation-states.

8.3 CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF TAIKO STUDIES

Wadaiko has from the beginning an intercultural musical genre, combining native Japanese musical styles – both folk and classical – with elements from around the world (particular American popular music). While it began as a large ensemble-dominated genre, it has expanded to encapsulate a wide variety of forms of presentation, including solo and small ensemble performances. The music has grown more complex as the art form has grown intercultural, moving beyond its folk music origins to enter the world of art music.

Even as this dissertation has been an attempt to address a perceived gap in taiko studies through the creation of an intercultural history of *wadaiko* through an analysis of musical style, this is just the tip of the iceberg in regards to the directions in which the field of Taiko Studies could proceed in the future. Indeed, the information and analyses within this chapter could serve

as a foundation for future examinations of *wadaiko*, not just in relation to musical style but within a broader context.

In preceding chapters, I examined discourses of tradition and their connection to *wadaiko* repertoire, which I again surveyed in this chapter. While I used this discussion as fodder for the construction of a history of *wadaiko* based on the development of musical style, future studies could take an opposite approach, with the study of discourses of tradition in *wadaiko* being used in a broader examination of the idea of tradition in an intercultural musical environment. Indeed, many of the discussions of repertoire in this dissertation could be used to enhance broader studies. For example, tying this study to issues of identity in relation to *wadaiko* performance, how are conceptions of “Japanese American” expressed within compositional practices; that is, how does the music created by artists reflect how they define their position within American society?

Meanwhile, this examination of *wadaiko* in Japan and the United States could serve as the groundwork for the study of the art form on a global scale. *Wadaiko* is performed beyond Japan and the United States; however, with the exception of a few studies about the genre as it exists in Canada and New Zealand (de Ferranti 2006; Johnson 2008), little work has been done on the growth of the art form on a larger level. The methodology I use in this dissertation – combining historical data, musical analysis, and the examination of discourse – could serve as a model for future studies of *wadaiko* in other geographic areas. For example, just as the activities of Osuwa Daiko and Sukeroku Taiko affected the development of performance style in the United States, how has the worldwide touring of Ondekoza and Kodo affected the worldwide development of *wadaiko* performance practices?

At the same time, I acknowledge that the broad scope of this dissertation leaves room for more concentrated studies of the individual artists discussed in the previous chapters. Just as I selected a few works from each artist to demonstrate how *wadaiko* musical style developed as a whole, future writings could examine the development of musical style of a single artist; for example, a comparative survey of Kodo's music as it has developed over the last thirty years. A deeper study of Hayashi Eitetsu's performance style, for example, could contribute much to an understanding of *wadaiko* music, and would serve as a compliment to the publications that he himself have written; further, an analysis of these publications and the discourse contained within could add much to a broader examination of how *wadaiko* artists talk about their music.

Further, there remains a large range of studies that could be done on Japanese-language discourse. Owing largely to the materials I was able to acquire – which I acknowledge is not a full library of resources, as I am aware of several out-of-print books about *wadaiko* I was unable to investigate – this study only scratches the surface of Japanese-language verbal representations of *wadaiko* performance. Indeed, I focus on only a few groups, but as discussed in the introduction of this dissertation there are performers in Japan who would challenge the history as I have written it.³³⁴ Given the sheer number of performers in Japan, a more substantial examination of *wadaiko* in Japan would not only contribute to a greater understanding of the art form in its country of origin, but could reveal how performers in the native country of an art form negotiate the intercultural performance of a musical genre. Is there a Japanese-language equivalent, for example, to the Facebook group discussion forum, and how has it affected the continued evolution of *wadaiko* in that country? Additionally, what effect have national organizations such as the Nippon Taiko Foundation had on the growth of the art form?

³³⁴ Of course, this is the danger in any writing of history, recognizing that it is a very subjective act.

These represent just a few of the possible directions in which the field of Taiko Studies could evolve, and how my study could contribute to this growth. In this dissertation, I have presented a history of *wadaiko* constructed by a detailed study of the music created by professional and semi-professional performers. I have discussed the emergence of artists in Japan and the United States and their intercultural interaction; as such, I have demonstrated how an art form spreads interculturally and exists beyond national borders. Further, I have highlighted the different verbal representations utilized by performers (including ideas of “tradition”), the way that this has influenced the development of *wadaiko* repertoire, and especially in this chapter how it has is affected ideas of originality and performance rights; in this manner, I have revealed how verbal representation affects the performance of music. Meanwhile, I have highlighted the complications raised by the fact that I am discussing verbal representations in two languages, presenting the impact of language on music.

In this manner, I have developed a methodology for the construction of a history of music that is transmitted primarily by oral means. This history is diachronic in nature, recognizing that music changes over time. The processes discussed in this dissertation are still playing out in *wadaiko* performance today. As new generations of performers emerge, they will find different ways to engage with the art form, finding new meaning in the confluence of Japanese and non-Japanese musical and visual elements, an art form equally at home at local festivals and in concerts halls.

APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTS

This appendix includes general descriptions and pictures of the primary instruments discussed in this dissertation.

A.1 *BYŌ-UCHI-DAIKO* 鉦打ち太鼓 “TACK-HIT DRUM”

A type of drum in which the skin is attached to the wooden body via tacks (*byō*). Typically hit with a wooden drumstick called a *bachī*.

The various types of *byō-uchi-daiko* used in *wadaiko* and other performance arts discussed in this dissertation are listed below.

A.1.1 *Nagadō-daiko* 長胴太鼓 “long-bodied drum”

A wine barrel-shaped drum, with heads tacked to the body. Typically used for rhythmic accompaniment in festival orchestras (*matsuri-bayashi*) and kabuki music (*kabuki-hayashi*); in *wadaiko*, primarily used for rhythmic melody.



Figure 111. A *nagadō-daiko*

June 23, 2009. Iida, Japan

Picture by the author

A.1.2 *Ō-daiko* 長胴太鼓 “long-bodied drum”

A larger *nagadō-daiko*, its size varying depending on the situation – in festival music, the *ō-daiko* is a rather small (perhaps 12 inches in diameter), while in *kabuki-hayashi* an *ō-daiko* is typically 15 to 20 inches in diameter.

In *hōgaku*, hit with various types of drumsticks (such as ones with felt on the end) as well as normal wooden drumsticks.

The *ō-daiko* used by Sukeroku-style groups is typically the size of a *kabuki-hayashi* *ō-daiko* (perhaps 16 to 20 inches in diameter). In groups influenced more by Osuwa Daiko and Ondekoza/Kodo, however, the *ō-daiko* tends to be in excess of two feet in diameter.

Within the Osuwa Daiko orchestration scheme, used to provide rhythmic accent.



Figure 112. An *ō-daiko*

Pan-Pacific Festival, Honolulu, Hawaii. June 11, 2010.

Picture by the author

A.1.3 *Hiradō-daiko* 平胴太鼓 “flat-bodied drum”

A type of *byō-uchi-daiko*, named so because it is flat (a wide diameter, but not very deep). Used individually, often in the same role as a large *nagadō-daiko* or *ō-daiko*; additionally, smaller *hiradō-daiko* may be used as part of a taiko set, in replacement of a *nagadō-daiko*.



Figure 113. A *hiradō-daiko*, played in a manner similar to an *ō-daiko*

2013 East Coast Taiko Conference, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, February 2, 2013

Picture by the author

A.1.4 *Sumō-daiko* 相撲太鼓

A small *byō-uchi-daiko* used in Sumō ceremonies as well as some festival music. Brought into *wadaiko* in the 1980s, typically as part of a taiko set.

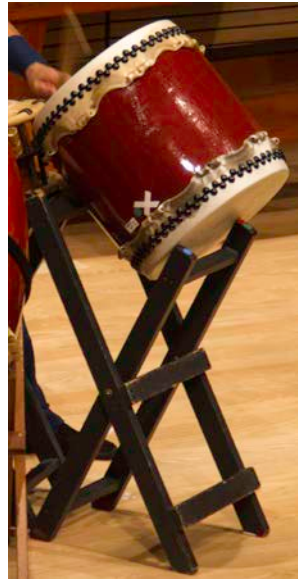


Figure 114. A *sumō-daiko*

2013 East Coast Taiko Conference, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, February 2, 2013

Picture by the author

A.2 SHIME-DAIKO 締太鼓 “TIGHTENED DRUM”

Named so because unlike the *nagadō-daiko*, this drum can be tightened or loosened (traditionally with ropes, but in the modern era there are also some drums with bolts – both are seen in the below pictures).

Typically used in both folk, classical, and *wadaiko* settings to provide an underlying rhythmic ostinato. Hit with a wooden drumstick.

The majority of *shime-daiko* used in these performance settings are smaller than *nagadō-daiko*, although given that the name applies to a tightening method there can also be larger-sized *shime-daiko*.



Figure 115. Several *shime-daiko*, two rope-tightened and one bolt-tightened

Iida, Japan. June 23, 2009.

Picture by the author

A.2.1 *Katsugi okedō-daiko* かつぎ桶胴太鼓 “carried barrel-body drum”

A type of *shime-daiko* from the Tōhoku region of Japan that is primarily used in a dance from Iwate Prefecture called the “Shishi Odori” (“Deer Dance”). Its body is longer than a regular *shime-daiko*. In its original form, carried with a strap over one shoulder

Hayashi Eitetsu first adapted the drum to be placed on a special stand, to be played both individually and as part of a set. Leonard Eto adapted it even further, creating a lighter version of the drum that could be moved so that both sides of the drum could be played by an individual.



Figure 116. *Katsugi okedō-daiko* being played at the 2009 Pan-Pacific Festival in Honolulu, Hawaii

Waikiki, Honolulu. June 8, 2009

Photo by the author

A.3 *UCHIWA-DAIKO* 団扇太鼓 “FAN DRUM”

A handheld drum shaped like a fan, originally used in Buddhist rite. Typically hit with a wooden drumstick.

Hayashi Eitetsu first brought it into *wadaiko*, playing both one individually and many organized by pitch on a rack as part of a taiko set.



Figure 117. *Uchiwa-daiko* being played at the 2009 Pan-Pacific Festival

Waikiki, Honolulu. June 7, 2009

Photo by the author

A.4 ATARIGANE 当たり鉦 HANDHELD GONG

A handheld gong, used in *wadaiko* and festival music to provide rhythmic accompaniment (often playing an ostinato similar to the *shime-daiko*).

Typically hit with a *shūmoku*, a piece of deer horn attached to the end of a slender bamboo rod.



Figure 118. *Atarigane* being played as part of a *matsuri-bayashi*

Sanja Matsuri, Asakusa, Tokyo. May 20, 2012

A.5 FUE 笛 BAMBOO FLUTE

A bamboo flute.

Different types of *fue* are named after the type of bamboo used in its construction, as well as the role of the flute. For example, a *shinobue* is made from a type of bamboo called *shino*.

A specific type flute called a *nohkan* – made with different bamboo and lacquer – is used primarily in Noh music.



Figure 119. A *fue* being played as part of a *matsuri-bayashi*

Sanja Matsuri, Asakusa, Tokyo. May 20, 2012

APPENDIX B

MAPS

B.1 JAPAN

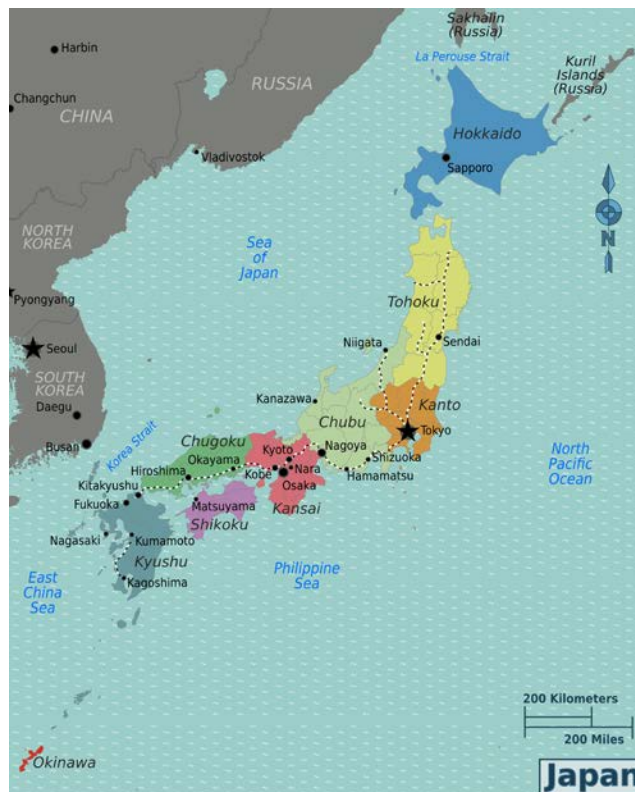


Figure 120. Map of Japan

http://wikitravel.org/en/File:Japan_regions_map.png

Used in accordance with the Creative Commons license

B.2 PLACES IN JAPAN RELEVANT TO WADAIKO HISTORY

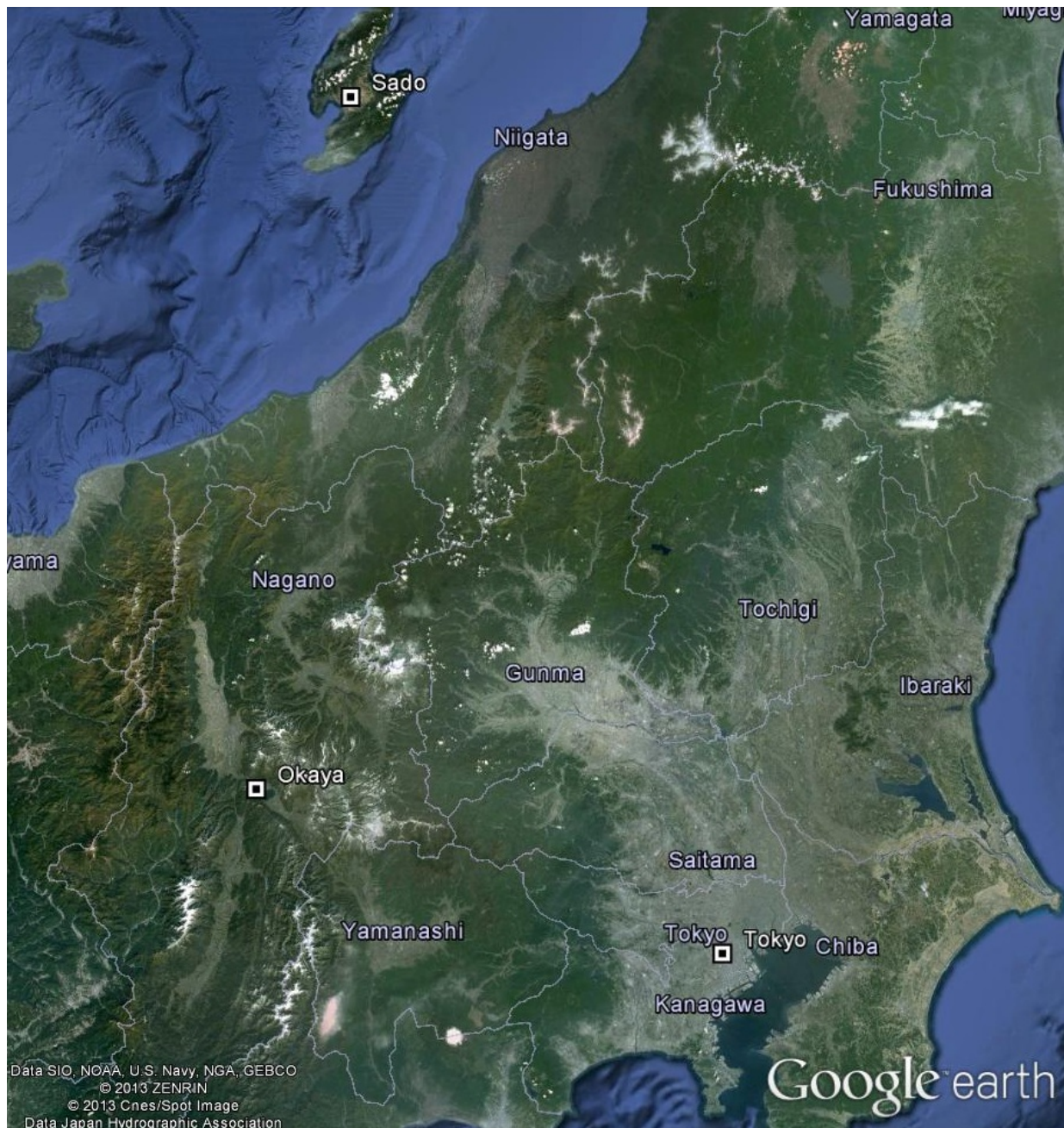


Figure 121. Map of Japanese places relevant to *wadaiko* history

Used in accordance with Google Maps/Google Earth Terms and Conditions and Fair Use Laws

Cities/places mentioned in this dissertation marked with a square and white text

Prefecture names in blue text, prefecture boundaries outlined in blue

B.3 TOKYO

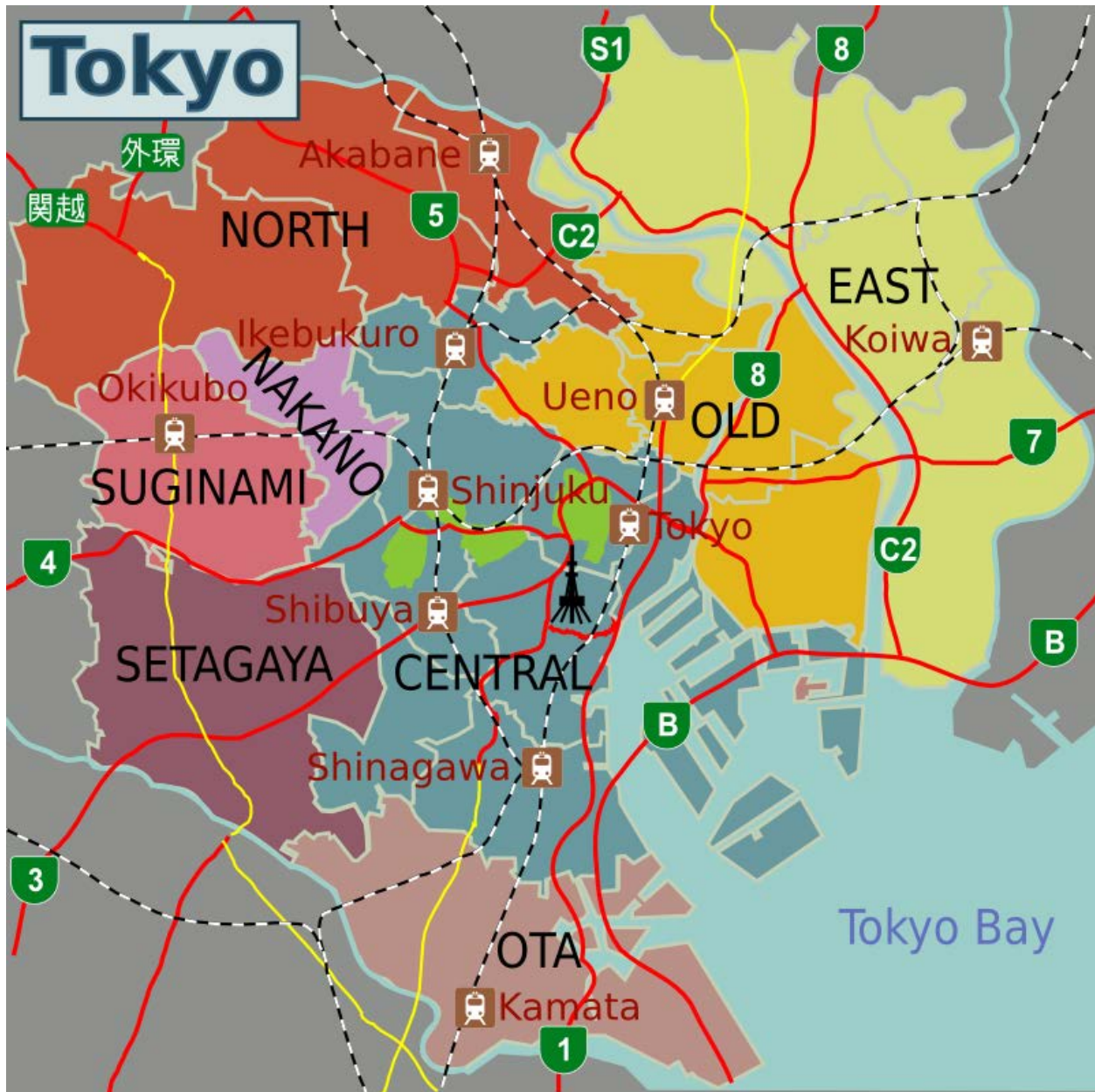


Figure 122. Map of eastern Tokyo

http://wikitravel.org/en/File:New_Tokyo_map.png

Used in accordance with the Creative Commons License

Areas of Tokyo differentiated by color

Shitamachi area listed as “Old” in this map

B.4 TOKYO SHITAMACHI AREA

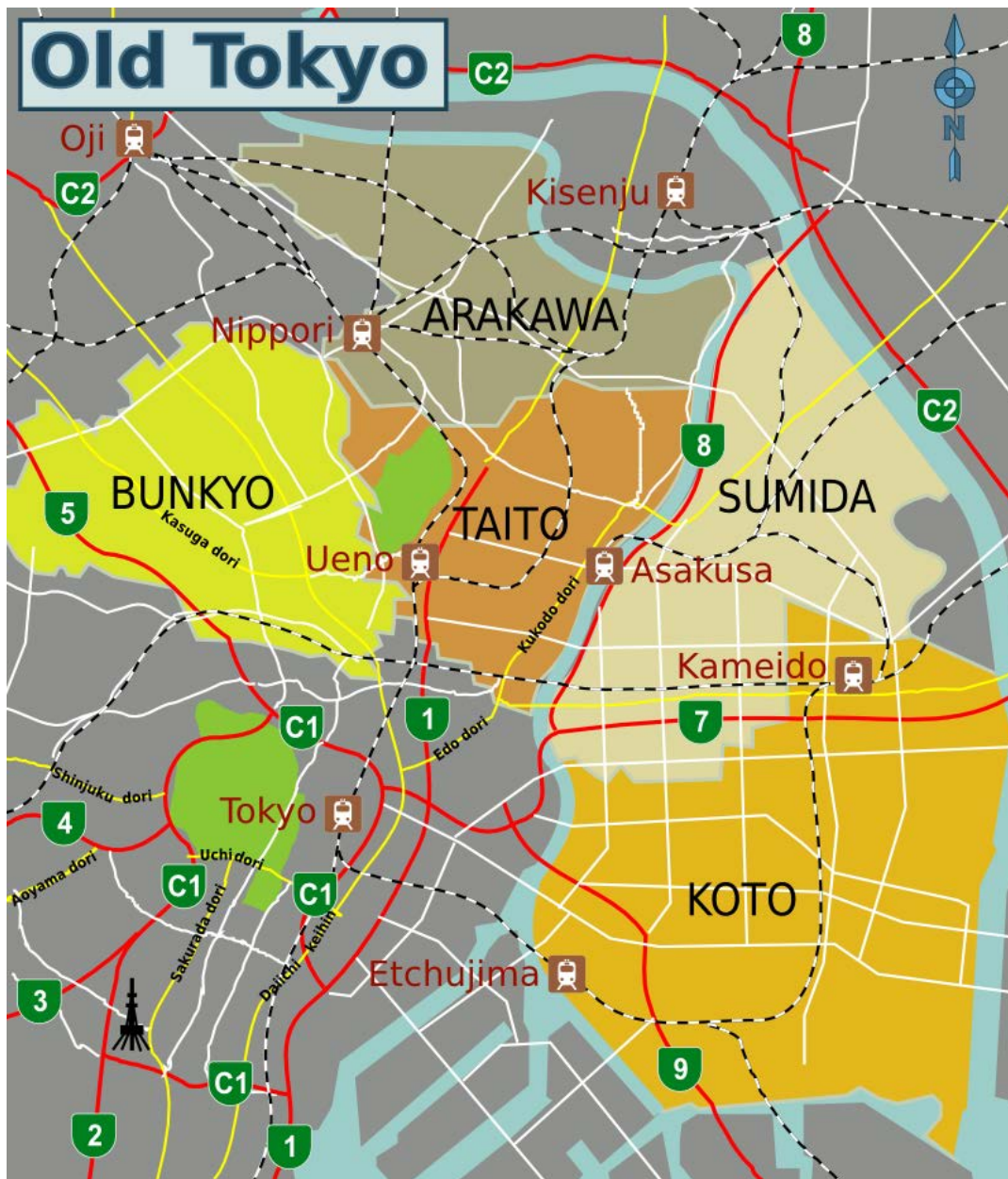


Figure 123. Map of Tokyo *Shitamachi* area

http://wikitravel.org/en/File:Shitamatchi_map.png

Used in accordance with the Creative Commons license

Shitamachi area named as “Old Tokyo” in this map

Ward names in all capital letters, boundaries distinguished by coloring

B.5 CALIFORNIA



Figure 124. Map of California

<http://wikitravel.org/en/File:Ca-regions.png>

Used in accordance with the Creative Commons license

Regions of California separated by color

Cities marked with circles

APPENDIX C

FIELDWORK INFORMATION

C.1 CONCERTS ATTENDED

Table 2. Concerts attended during fieldwork

Artist(s)	Location	Date
Kato Takumi & Shiobara Ryo	Bethany, WV	April 22, 2009
Kato Takumi & Shiobara Ryo	Pittsburgh Sakura Matsuri, Pittsburgh, PA	April 25, 2009
TOKARA, Shidara	Saiwai Shimoina <i>Wadaiko</i> Festival, Iida, Japan	June 28, 2009
Yamato	Erie, PA	November 1, 2009
Kato Takumi & Shiobara Ryo	Slippery Rock, PA	April 16, 2010
Kato Takumi & Shiobara Ryo	Pittsburgh Sakura Matsuri, Pittsburgh, PA	April 17, 2010
Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble	Pittsburgh, PA	November 6, 2010
Kenny Endo, Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble	Honolulu, HI	June 11, 2010
Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble	Ewa, HI	June 20, 2010
Kodo	Pittsburgh, PA	March 2, 2011
Kenny Endo	Slippery Rock, PA	March 29, 2011
Kenny Endo, Kaoru Watanabe	Beaver Falls, PA	March 30, 2011
On Ensemble	Torrance, CA	October 8, 2011
On Ensemble, Kenny Endo	San Luis Obispo, CA	October 14, 2011
San Jose Taiko	Campbell, CA	October 21, 2011
San Francisco Taiko Dojo, Sacramento Taiko Don, Hiroyuki Hayashida & ZIPANG	Berkeley, CA	November 5, 2011

Shidara	Tokyo, Japan	December 9, 2011
Semba Kiyohiko & KARUGAMOZU	Tokyo, Japan	December 15, 2011
Kodo	Tokyo, Japan	December 17, 2011
Kodo	Tokyo, Japan	December 18, 2011
Oedo Sukeroku Taiko	Tokyo, Japan	December 22, 2011
Leonard Eto	Tokyo, Japan	December 30, 2011
Kageyama Isaku	Tokyo, Japan	January 5, 2012
Semba Kiyohiko & KARUGAMOZU	Tokyo, Japan	January 6, 2012
Amanojaku	Tokyo, Japan	January 7, 2012
On Ensemble	Gardena, CA	March 11, 2012
Nihon Taiko Dojo	Sanja Matsuri, Tokyo, Japan	May 19, 2012
Kodo	Tokyo, Japan	May 20, 2012
On Ensemble	Cleveland, OH	January 26, 2013

C.2 FESTIVALS ATTENDED

Table 3. Festivals attended during fieldwork

Festival Name	Location	Date
Sanno Matsuri	Tokyo, Japan	June 15, 2008
Mitama Matsuri	Tokyo, Japan	July 13, 2008
Hachioji Summer Matsuri	Hachioji, Japan	August 2, 2008
Tachikawa Yoito Matsuri	Tachikawa, Japan	August 2, 2008
Tsukiji Honganji Bon Odori	Tokyo, Japan	August 7, 2008
Pan Pacific Festival	Honolulu, HI	June 8, 2009
Pan Pacific Festival	Honolulu, HI	June 11-13, 2010
Paia Mantokuji Mission Bon Odori	Paia, HI	July 10, 2010
Kurtistown Jodo Mission Bon Odori	Kurtistown, HI	July 24, 2010
Chichibu Yo-Matsuri	Chichibu, Japan	December 3, 2011
Roppongi Hills New Year's Celebration	Tokyo, Japan	January 1, 2012
Sanja Matsuri	Tokyo, Japan	May 18-20, 2012
Yushima Tenjin Grand Matsuri	Tokyo, Japan	May 26, 2012
Hanazono Shrine Grand	Tokyo, Japan	May 27, 2012

Matsuri		
Suga Shrine Grand Matsuri	Tokyo, Japan	June 3, 2012
Sanno Matsuri	Tokyo, Japan	June 7-17, 2012

C.3 WORKSHOPS/CLASSES TAKEN

Table 4. Workshops/classes taken during fieldwork

Workshop/Class Leader	Workshop/Class Title	Location	Date
Icho Daiko members	Beginner classes	Cleveland, OH	February 2009 (weekly)
Icho Daiko members	Intermediate classes	Cleveland, OH	March 2009 (weekly)
Kenny Endo	Taiko Center of the Pacific Summer Taiko Intensives	Honolulu, HI	June 8-12, 2009
San Jose Taiko members	Public Workshop	San Jose, CA	June 14, 2009
Art Lee & members of TOKARA	INADANI Taiko Drumming Course	Iida, Japan	June 22-27, 2009
Various	North American Taiko Conference	Los Angeles, CA	August 7-9, 2009
Kato Takumi & Shiobara Ryo	Private Workshop	Bethany, WV	April 18, 2010
Masato Baba & Bryan Yamami (TAIKOPROJECT)	Private Workshop	Pittsburgh, PA	April 20, 2010
Kenny Endo	Taiko Center of the Pacific Summer Taiko Intensives	Honolulu, HI	June 14-19, 2010
Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble members	Taiko Center of the Pacific Adult Beginner II, Adult Intermediate classes	Honolulu, HI	June 13-July 27, 2010 (twice weekly)
Kenny Endo	Private Workshop	Pittsburgh, PA	November 7, 2010
On Ensemble members	Private Workshop	Pittsburgh, PA	January 7, 2011
Kenny Endo	Taiko Center of the Pacific Summer Taiko Intensives	Honolulu, HI	June 6-10, 2011
Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble members	Taiko Center of the Pacific Adult Intermediate class	Honolulu, HI	June 20-August 11, 2011 (weekly)

Suzuki Kyosuke	North American Taiko Conference Summer Taiko Institute	San Jose, CA	August 15-16, 2011
Kaoru Watanabe	Kaoru Watanabe Taiko Center January Taiko intensive	New York, NY	January 27-29, 2012
Kris Bergstrom (On Ensemble)	Private Workshop	Pittsburgh, PA	January 27, 2013

C.4 EVENTS WORKED AS A VOLUNTEER DURING FIELDWORK PERIOD

Table 5. Events attended as volunteer during fieldwork

Event Name	Location	Date
Big Island Taiko Camp	Puna, HI	August 23-24, 2010
North American Taiko Conference	Stanford, CA	August 18-21, 2011
Eastern Taiko Conference	Middletown, CT	March 30-April 1, 2012
East Coast Taiko Conference	Providence, RI	February 1-3, 2013

C.5 ENSEMBLES VISITED

Table 6. Ensembles visited during fieldwork

Group Name	Location	Date
Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble	Honolulu, HI	June 11, 2009
Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble	Honolulu, HI	June 20-July 29, 2010 (three times a week)
Zenshin Taiko	Wailuku, HI	July 11, 2010
Taikoshoji Taiko	Hilo, Hawaii	July 25, 2010
Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble	Honolulu, HI	June 12-August 11, 2011 (three times a week)
Kinnara Taiko	Los Angeles, CA	October 27, 2011

Stanford Taiko	Stanford, CA	October 31, 2011
Jun Daiko	Mountain View, CA	November 1, 2011
Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble	Honolulu, HI	April 5-32, 2012 (three times a week)

C.6 INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

Table 7. Interviews conducted during fieldwork

Name	Group Affiliation	Location	Date
Kenny Endo		Honolulu, HI	June 29, 2010
Kenny & Chizuko Endo		Honolulu, HI	July 28, 2010
Kenny Endo		Honolulu, HI	July 6, 2011
Walter Tsushima	Wajima Kiriko Taiko Association	City of Industry, CA	October 12, 2011
Joe Small		Los Angeles, CA	October 18, 2011
Shoji Kameda	On Ensemble	Los Angeles, CA	October 25, 2011
Linda Uyechi	Stanford Taiko, Jun Daiko	Stanford, CA	October 31, 2011
Stephen Sano	Stanford Taiko	Stanford, CA	October 31, 2011
Roy & PJ Hirabayashi	San Jose Taiko	San Jose, CA	November 3, 2011
Wisa Uemura, Franco Imperial, & Adam Weiner	San Jose Taiko	San Jose, CA	November 3, 2011
Kris Bergstrom	On Ensemble	Torrance, CA	November 8, 2011
Masato Baba	On Ensemble, TAIKOPROJECT	Los Angeles, CA	November 8, 2011

Bryan Yamami	TAIKOPROJECT	Anaheim Hills, CA	November 9, 2011
Johnny Mori	Kinnara Taiko	Los Angeles, CA	November 10, 2011
Miyamoto Yoshihiko	Miyamoto Unosuke Shōten	Tokyo, Japan	December 6, 2011
Kageyama Isaku	Amanojaku	Tokyo, Japan	January 8, 2012
Chris Holland	Amanojaku	Tokyo, Japan	December 14, 2012
Alan Okada	Soh Daiko	New York, NY	January 30, 2012
Kaoru Watanabe		New York, NY	January 31, 2012

APPENDIX D

GLOSSARY/INDEX

This appendix contains a glossary/index of terms, group/performer names, and composition titles discussed in this dissertation. In addition to the romanized word, I have included the original Japanese characters, as well as the page number where the item first appears. Further, I have included translations for all terms and composition titles for which a translation would be relevant. Composers have also been provided for pieces when known.

D.1 TERMS

Table 8. Terms used in dissertation

Romanized Name/Word	Kanji/Kana	Translation	Page #
<i>Atarigane</i>	当り鉦	Handheld gong	5
<i>Bachi</i>	桴	Drumsticks	80
<i>Bon daiko</i>	盆太鼓	The drumming that accompanies bon odori	94
<i>Bon odori</i>	盆踊り	Bon dancing	95
<i>Byō-uchi-daiko</i>	鉦打ち太鼓	A drum in which the head is attached to the body by tacks	60
<i>Chichibu Yo-Matsuri</i>	秩父夜祭	Chichibu Night Festival	140

<i>Daibyōshi-daiko</i>	大拍子太鼓	A small, cylindrical <i>shime-daiko</i>	60
<i>Dashi</i>	山車	Festival floats	107
<i>Edo-bayashi</i>	江戸囃子	Festival music of the Asakusa area of Tokyo	94
<i>Edo Kotobuki-jishi</i>	江戸寿獅子	Celebratory lion dance from the Shitamachi area of Tokyo	5
<i>Fuchi-uchi</i>	ふちうち	Hitting the rim of the drum	63
<i>Fue</i>	笛	Bamboo transverse flute	4
<i>Gagaku</i>	雅楽	Music of the court	111
<i>Geza ongaku</i>	下座音楽	Offstage music	112
<i>Gohei</i>	御幣	Paper offering to the gods	83
<i>goshintai</i>	御神体	Shinto object of worship	77
<i>Hane</i>	跳ね	“jumping”; a light feel	97
<i>Hiradō-daiko</i>	平胴太鼓	A flat <i>byō-uchi-daiko</i>	187
<i>Hōgaku</i>	邦楽	Japanese classical music	92
<i>Hōgaku-hayashi</i>	邦楽囃子	Music of the theater	111
<i>Horagai</i>	法螺貝	Conch shell trumpet	68
<i>Hozonkai</i>	保存会	Preservation society	82
<i>Hyōtan</i>	瓢箪	Japanese gourd	239
<i>Kabuki-hayashi</i>	歌舞伎囃子	Music of kabuki	111
<i>Kagura</i>	神楽	Shinto music and dance	59
<i>Kagura-bayashi</i>	神楽囃子	Music that accompanies sato-kagura	59
<i>Kagura-daiko</i>	神楽太鼓	The drumming for kagura	59
<i>Kakegoe</i>	掛け声	Stylized shouts used to keep time in hōgaku	92
<i>Kanda-bayashi</i>	神田囃子	Festival music of the Kanda area of Tokyo	108
<i>Katsugi okedō-daiko</i>	かつぎ桶胴太鼓	Shoulder-carried, “bucket drum”	3
<i>Kayōkyoku</i>	歌謡曲	Contemporary (post-World War II) Japanese pop music	56
<i>Keiongaku</i>	軽音楽	Light music	56
<i>kiai</i>	気合い	“spirited shout”	78
<i>Ko-tsuzumi</i>	小鼓	Small hourglass-shaped drum	4
<i>Kuchi-shōga</i>	口唱歌	Syllabary, in which words represent sounds	62
<i>Kumidaiko</i>	組太鼓	Ensemble drumming	19
<i>Kuromisu</i>	黒御簾	Room offstage in kabuki theaters where a group of musicians play	112
<i>Matsuri</i>	祭り	Festival	106
<i>Matsuri-bayashi</i>	祭り囃子	Festival orchestra	106
<i>Mi-kagura</i>	未神楽	Kagura performed in the Imperial court	59

<i>Mikoshi</i>	神輿	Portable shrine	107
<i>Mokugyo</i>	木魚	A wooden instrument shaped like the mouth of a fish, used in Buddhist music	276
<i>Nagadō-daiko</i>	長胴太鼓	Medium-large byō-uchi-daiko	65
<i>Naname</i>	斜め	“Slanted” used as <i>naname</i> stand (a slanted stand)	6
<i>Nebaru</i>	粘る	“to stick”; a sticky feel	97
<i>Nihon no Taiko</i>	日本の太鼓	Japanese drum	39
<i>Noh-hayashi</i>	能囃子	Music of Noh	111
<i>Nohkan</i>	能管	High-pitched bamboo flute	111
<i>Norito</i>	祝詞	Shinto prayer chanting	68
<i>Ō-daiko</i>	大太鼓	Large drum	4
<i>Ō-tsuzumi</i>	大鼓	Large hourglass-shaped drum	111
<i>omoi</i>	重い	“heavy”; a heavy feel	97
<i>Ondeko</i>	鬼太鼓	“demon drumming,” from Sado	136
<i>Sato-kagura</i>	里神楽	Kagura performed outside the court	59
<i>Shime-daiko</i>	締太鼓	A drum in which the head is attached to a ring and tightened via ropes	3
<i>Shinobue</i>	篠笛	Flute made with <i>shino</i> bamboo	60
<i>Sumō-daiko</i>	相撲太鼓	A small nagadō-daiko used in sumo events	276
<i>Taiko</i>	太鼓	drum	3
<i>Takebue</i>	竹笛	Bamboo flute	112
<i>Tettō</i>	鉄筒	Original instrument creation of Oguchi Daihachi	75
<i>Tsukeshime-daiko</i>	附締太鼓	A drum in which the head is attached to a ring and tightened via ropes	60
<i>Uchiwa-daiko</i>	団扇太鼓	“Fan drum”; a head on a wooden ring attached to a wooden handle	261
<i>Wadaiko</i>	和太鼓	Japanese drum	1
<i>Yagura</i>	櫓	Tower	95
<i>Yama-oroshi</i>	山おろし	A roll that begins slow and gets faster	69
<i>Yatai</i>	屋台	Term for festival floats used Chichibu, Saitama Prefecture	108

D.2 NAMES OF GROUPS AND PERFORMERS

Table 9. Groups/performers discussed in dissertation

Name	Kanji/Kana	Page #
Bachiatari	バチあたり	329
Den Tagayasu	田耕	135
Endo, Kenny	ケニー遠藤	2
Eto, Leonard	レナード衛藤	185
GOCOO		301
Hayashi Eitetsu	林英哲	137
Ishikura Yoshihisa	石倉義久	99
Ishizuka Yutaka	石塚由孝	93
Kinnara Taiko		220
Kobayashi Seido	小林正道	99
Kodo	鼓童	178
Mochizuki Saburo	望月左武郎	4
Oedo Sukeroku Kai	大江戸助六会	99
Oguchi Daihachi	小口大八	53
On Ensemble		308
Ondekoza	鬼太鼓座	135
Onozato Ganei	小野里元栄	99
Osuwa Daiko	御諏訪太鼓	74
San Francisco Taiko Doukougai/San Francisco Taiko Dojo		200/209
San Jose Taiko		231
Shin On Taiko	新音太鼓	102
Sukeroku Taiko	助六太鼓	105
Tosha Kiyonari	藤舎清成	131
Yushima Tenjin Taiko Hozonkai Sukeroku Daiko Group	湯島天神太鼓保存会助六太鼓助六太鼓グループ	105

D.3 COMPOSITION TITLES/RHYTHMS/FESTIVAL MUSIC NAMES

Table 10. Compositions/rhythms/music discussed in dissertation

Title	Kanji/Kana	Composer	Translation	Page #
“Ashura”		Mas Kodani		222
<i>Bukkiri</i>	ぶっきり		Sudden cut	143
<i>Chichibu Yatai-bayashi</i>	秩父屋台囃子			143
<i>Hi no taiko</i>	火の太鼓		Fire Taiko	155
“Hiryū San-dan Gaeshi”	飛竜三段返し	Oguchi Daihachi	The Dragon God Descends Three Times	76
“Irodori”	彩	Leonard Eto	Colors	186
“Kamakura”	鎌倉			108
<i>Kiyari-daiko</i>	木遣太鼓			180
<i>Ko-nami</i>	小波		Small wave	143
“Matsuri Daiko”	祭り太鼓	Sukeroku Taiko		114
“Midare Uchi”	乱れ打ち	Sukeroku Taiko	Random hitting	103
“Miyake”	三宅	Traditional; arranged by Kodo		182
“Monochrome for Japanese drums and gongs”	日本太鼓と銅鑼のためのモノクローム	Ishii Maki		168
“Mono-Prism for Japanese drums and orchestra”	日本太鼓とオーケストラのためのモノプリズム	Ishii Maki		175
<i>Ō-nami</i>	大波		Large wave	143
“Oroshi Daiko”	おろし太鼓	Sukeroku Taiko		114

“Sennen no Kamoku”	千年の寡黙	Hayashi Eitetsu	The Quiet Ages	261
“Shichōme”	四丁目		Fourth avenue	108
“Shiraume Daiko”	白梅太鼓	Sukeroku Taiko	White Plum Taiko	114
“Shōten”	昇殿		The entry into a shrine or temple	108
“Sokobayashi”		Tanaka Seiichi		201
“Suwa Ikazuchi”	諏訪雷	Oguchi Daihachi	Suwa Thunder	66
<i>Tamairé</i>	玉入れ		Ball toss	143
“Tsunami”		Tanaka Seiichi		211
“Watashi Watashitachi”		Shoji Kameda	I, Us	312
“Yamasong”		Shoji Kameda		321
“Yatai”	屋台		float	108
“Yatai-bayashi”	屋台囃子	Traditional; arranged by Odekoza		154
“Yodan Uchi”	四段打ち	Sukeroku Taiko	Hitting Four Sides	124

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