

Study on the Development of Braille Scores for *Koto* Music:

From the dawn of blind education in Japan to the period of music practice by Miyagi Michio (1894-1956).

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This dissertation aims to reveal how braille music scores were developed to be the way of musical notation specific to Japanese *koto* music. In the process of modernisation of music education and education for pupils with visual difficulties in Japan, the braille music scores based on the western music system, on one hand, linked up with *koto* music, a kind of Japanese traditional music, on the other, and formed its own notation method. The thesis clarified the process of its development in detail.

Braille music scores for *koto* music have hardly been studied up till today. It is partly because the scores are used mainly by visually handicapped people. Concerning the development of braille music scores, it has only been described that “research was extensively conducted in Taisho and Showa eras that has followed by various changes up to day.” The difficulty of translating *koto* music into the staff notation of braille music has not been referred to in detail.

In this study, *Tenji Hattatsu-shi* (History of braille development) written by Kingo Ohgawara (1937) was examined to identify its insufficient contents and descriptions about notations and, at the same time, historical materials written with letters and braille were further investigated. *Miyagi Michio Ongaku Sakuhin Mokuroku* (Music catalogue of Miyagi Michio) (1999) was learned to verify published music scores and to examine the contents of braille music scores written by Miyagi. Moreover, the historical materials of Japanese music, including post-Meiji era music education, and the education for the visually disabled were reviewed. Thus, the study aimed to reveal the historical background of people with visual difficulties and *koto* music and locate braille scores for *koto* music in the history of the respective disciplines.

Chapter 1 focused on the music score by touch for the visually handicapped, namely “*nade-fu*”, that was existed before braille music scores had been introduced to blind schools. The efforts of the Institute of Music and Tokyo Music School and those who worked on were examined to reveal how they tried to introduce the western music system to Japanese *koto* music. Details of the introduction process was clarified in reviewing *nade-fu*.

Chapter 2 examined the features and history of music education conducted in Tokyo Blind and Dumb School from the time when the licensing system of traditional Japanese arts, “iemoto” system, was incorporated into the school system to just before the time when the *koto* music training with braille music scores was started. During this period, the braille notation or music score for *koto* music was not developed yet. The notation and scores were not, however,

developed at once in Taisho era. There were signs in the early stage when braille was introduced. And it was influenced by the vocational education of western music that was temporarily introduced in the development of music education at the School. The impact of Tokyo Music School was also evident since Tokyo Blind and Dumb School came under the governance of Ministry of Education, same as Tokyo Music School, and the two schools were more closely related.

Chapter 3 detailed the history of braille *koto* music notation at Tokyo School for the Blind. The notation developed in Taisho era gradually increased the number of its symbols of notation. However, their meanings do not correspond with the actual playing method so it was difficult for players to remember. In the beginning of Showa era, the western system was applied except for some peculiar playing style to play classical *koto* music. Therefore, various western music symbols were integrated and players had to memorise much less number of symbols. The same characteristic was found in the braille score book for *koto* music, *Miyagi Michio Sakkyokushu* (Compositions by Miyagi Michio) made within the School. But, the notation developed by Osaka City Blind School was employed in this book, same as the autographic braille scores by Miyagi. This shows that the notation for Yamada School of *koto* developed and revised in Taisho era and that for Ikuta School of *koto* developed at Osaka City Blind School were existed together at Tokyo School for the Blind in the early Showa era.

Chapter 4 examined the description of a commentary of braille score for *koto* music, *Tenji Sofu Kaisetsu* (1925) that explains the notation of Osaka City Blind School. The notation was examined in comparison with that of Tokyo School for the Blind. The analysis revealed that the notation of Osaka City Blind School was thoroughly based on the western braille music notation except the symbols of playing method. Even for the symbols, they employed ones in western music to associate with tones and movements while playing. In other words, it was a logical notation that was easy to remember for players if they understood the meanings of western music symbols. Moreover, it is clear that Miyagi's first performance in Osaka was firmly related to the notation's establishment. Also, *Tenji Sofu Kaisetsu* was an achievement of Kawabata Yoneitsu, a graduate of the School, who visited Tokyo to study "new-style *koto* music". It was also revealed that Kawabata and Miyagi had a direct contact as Miyagi taught Kawabata "new-style *koto* music" in Tokyo.

Chapter 5 dealt with Miyagi's autographic braille scores. For the analysis of braille scores, it was essential to develop a new perspective different from the viewpoint to analyse printed scores. Partly employing the approach for printed ones, the characteristics of braille notation was clarified as a whole. Also, the notation with the special focus on the composition of scores and tools for notation was examined. As the result, it was confirmed that most of the scores were made in his later years during the period that Miyagi composed music. It was revealed that his notation method differed and changed depending on the period. Then, Miyagi's hand-braille and two printed and published scores of the music titled "Aki no Shirabe" were

comparatively analysed. The score, which has the feature of the oldest style of notation among existing braille scores written by Miyagi in an didactic manner, was examined comparatively with two other published printed scores. As a result, the analysis revealed that the music held information that showed Miyagi's direct intention as a composer and that there were differences in contents learned by respective students of Miyagi's, including the blind or printed score users. Thus, the change in the role of autographic braille scores was also observed.

In conclusion, three external factors were clarified for the braille score of *koto* music to be created and changed in the process of its development, such as (i) the relationship between Tokyo School for the Blind and Institute of Music or Tokyo Music School, (ii) the introduction of new notation developed by Osaka City Blind School, and (iii) the influence of Miyagi Michio.