

TOWARDS A HISTORY OF JAPANESE NARRATIVE MUSIC

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Introduction

Japan has maintained and elaborated a tradition of musical narration (*katarimono*) well into the modern era. Extant styles such as *kōshiki*, *shōmyō*, *heike*, *kōwaka*, *gidayū*, *itchū*, *ōzatsuma*, *tokiwazu* and *kiyomoto* offer to the researcher a variety of traditions spanning a long period of historical development. In addition, there are many musical narratives in the area of surviving folk culture. If we add styles which no longer survive, such as *sekkyō-bushi*, the range becomes quite significant, though hardly able to compete with China, which still boasts over 350 styles of musical narration today.

Although existing as separate musical and performance genres, these styles at the same time form part of what can be called a continuous tradition of *katarimono* stretching back into the mists of time. Narrative performance in early Japan was one way of preserving and reliving history; it was “performed history”. As a literary culture developed, some of these genres came to be regarded and studied also as literature; others remained purely as performing arts. Heike narrative is one genre which has been until recently considered as a literary work with a single author. Similarly with works such as the *Soga Monogatari* and the “literary” genre of *otogizōshi*, and with *sekkyō-bushi* texts, all of which are now being reassessed as the written versions of performance texts carried by a class of performers whose role in the creation process was to interact with a tradition and its audience.

The comprehensive research of Japanese narrative music is still in its infancy. This paper endeavours to establish an appropriate framework for a comprehensive study of Japanese narrative music covering the major extant genres. Such research should be a synthesis of the musical and textual aspects of the narrative. By concentrating on the musical analysis of those styles which are still extant in performance it will be both a synchronic study, but at the same time it will have a diachronic dimension through the historical treatment of the genres in relation to each other.

Change within the narrative tradition as a whole took many forms over the centuries, including the use of new instruments, new musical scales, indeed an overall elaboration of the musical aspect of the narrative performance. There was also significant change in the increasing use of written texts, and the development of musical notations. In addition, new

kinds of subject matter emerged, as well as the re-use of old themes with new twists. Furthermore, new performance situations emerged, such as the use of narrative in the puppet theatre and the *kabuki* theatre from the seventeenth century. From around this time too we see the specialization of singer and instrumentalist, which testifies to an increasingly complex narrative situation. Whereas in medieval narrative, there was one performer who had complete control over his performance, in the Edo period it was a joint effort; straight narrative changed to narrative with a visual element, and a concomitant loss of the ability for improvisation in performance.

Despite all the changes just alluded to, there are certain structural principles which continued to form the basis of all narrative music genres. This includes the use of formulaic material. It is hypothesized that a major aspect of change is the changing meaning and function of formulaic melodic material, or musical patterns, in the various stages of the development of narrative music.

It is this aspect of continuity within the various changes in the narrative tradition which forms the focus of this paper. Most examples will be drawn from two genres which have been transmitted to the present day, *heike* narrative and *gidayū* narrative¹. They can be taken to represent respectively the narrative music of the medieval period and the early modern (Edo) period.

Problems of research

Research has been carried out by many people on both the literary and the musical aspects of most of the genres mentioned, but because cross-genre comparative studies of narrative music are almost non-existent, many problems arise, not least of which is that of terminology (this will be discussed in the final part of the paper). In addition, methodological problems abound. These issues will be discussed first. At this general level, three problems can be noted: the joint use of two kinds of data: historical data and contemporary performance, and their respective limitations; the issue of orality versus literacy; and the integration of the verbal and musical aspects of research.

The use of two kinds of data: written documents and extant performance

If you want to do musical study, there is not much choice but to concentrate on extant performance. Some might object on the grounds that only historical documentation can show us what musical performance was like in the past. I would reply that the study of the texts, scores and other documentation is a different issue. However, it has to be admitted that each of these kinds of data has its limitations. Documents usually only indicate the verbal aspect of narrative performance. Notations when they exist are not sufficiently detailed or prescriptive to be able to recreate the performed musical narrative. The limitation of extant performance on the other hand lies in the fact that change occurs constantly, not only through the

emergence of new narrative genres in the tradition as a whole, but also within one genre over time, as it is influenced by later genres. This means that mutual influences are far from clear and that historical interaction is difficult to establish. A style like heike narrative which originated in medieval period has certainly changed since then and been influenced by later narrative and other musical styles. One cannot take it for granted that heike was like this when *jōruri* emerged from it around the fifteenth century.

Orality and literacy: the application of Parry-Lord theory

The study of narrative in performance was revolutionized by the development of the oral-formulaic theory of Parry and Lord (Lord 1960; Foley 1988). The theory is concerned with the concept of “structural slots”, and a stock of verbal “slot fillers”, at two structural levels: formulas and themes. A formula is a group of words (forming a phrase or line of poetic text) which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea. A theme is an idea expressed in several phrases or lines regularly used in telling a tale. This leads to a highly formulaic style which enables the storyteller to compose the narrative in performance in response to the particular performance situation.

The Parry-Lord, or oral-formulaic theory has already been successfully used in the Japanese context by Yamamoto Kichizō (1988) on *goze uta* and Hyōdō Hiromi (1990, 1992) on *zatō biwa* and its implications for heike narration. Yamamoto and Hyōdō both demonstrated that each performance is different, and can be said to be composed in performance using pre-existing materials, in the form of verbal and melodic formulas, close to the Parry-Lord model.

The tradition of Japanese musical narration has its origins in oral narratives, such as those which formed the basis for early writings like the *Kojiki* (712). In addition, examples of oral narratives can still be seen in folk styles such as *zatō biwa* and *goze uta*. These do not have written texts (except some which have been recorded by folklorists but not used by the performers), and are performed by blind (formerly itinerant and outcaste class) performers.

Genres such as heike and *gidayū* narrative have however had considerable interaction with the upper class literate culture, and rely in varying degrees on written texts and notation for their transmission and whose performance has become largely fixed, without improvisation.

In spite of this, there remains in their verbal syntax and structure vestiges of an oral heritage. The oral nature of Japanese musical narrative is suggested by their conspicuous use of formulas, both in the text and in the melody of the sung and instrumental parts.

Orality of verbal and musical aspects of the narrative

If we conceive of the tradition of Japanese narrative music (*katarimono*) as one broad type of performing art, we can discern three, perhaps four phases of development or types of narrative, relating to different degrees of orality, associated with different eras of Japanese

culture: the era of purely oral or pre-literate culture, the era of chirographic culture, the era of print media and the era of modernization.

The purely oral type or pre-literate phase is putatively the kind of narratives recited by the *kataribe* professional narrators for the Yamato rulers before the importation or widespread use of Chinese writing, but which formed the basis for the official chronicles of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon Shoki*. The oral narratives which are recorded in the *Omorosōshi* of Okinawan culture and the *Yukar* narratives of the Ainu culture are further examples of this type. Probably the narratives of blind priest-like reciters in Kyushu (*zatō biwa*) and the blind women balladeers of Echigo (*goze*) can be included in this type, although they operated within a literate culture.

The chirographic culture of the medieval era led to interaction between oral narratives and the literate elite culture, resulting in written texts and eventually also some kind of musical notation. The *heike* narrative, for example, was involved in intensive interaction with literate culture and the aesthetic not only of the warrior class, but also of court culture.

When the print media developed in the seventeenth century, the new literacy almost supplanted the oral aspects of performed narratives, but “residual orality”, to use Walter Ong (1982)’s term, can still be found in both music and texts. In this stage, we can include *gidayū* and *kiyomoto* narrative.

Possibly a fourth phase, for the post-westernization era, should be added, when the desperate need for preservation of traditional forms led to their fossilization. This stage also eventually benefitted from the development of secondary orality, with the emergence of electronic aids to preservation and transmission in the form of sound recording and the electronic mass media.

This paper is concerned with the changes between phase two and three, as represented respectively by *heike* narrative and *gidayū*. The orality of the verbal narrative started to be influenced by the production of written manuscripts in the Kamakura period. There were “authorized versions” (called *kataribon*) of the performed *heike* narrative, such as that of Kakuichi Kengyō in 1371. The Kakuichi version was intended to be an authorization of the professional organization or guild (*tōdō*) newly established to protect the blind, and of which Kakuichi was the head. It was a secret document, to be used for the transmission of the orthodox line of the *heike* narrative. On the other hand, there were “reading texts” (*yomihon*), such as *Genpei Seisuiiki* (Hyōdō 1993), produced from the beginning to be read not recited. When sighted amateurs began to learn *heike* recitation as a hobby from the sixteenth century, texts with quite highly developed musical indications came to be produced. The most famous and musically comprehensive one is the *Heike Mabushi* 1776. This became the standard for performance in the Maeda school of *heike* narrative (*heikyoku*), which is the style of *heike* narrative preserved to the present day in both the Nagoya and Sendai schools of recitation.

Jōruri was originally an oral narrative art performed by itinerant outcast nun-like figures (*bikuni*), as well as by blind male *heike* performers. When it became an urban commercial entertainment in the form of puppet theatre with musical narration by sighted secular males, its texts started to be printed. The earliest published texts (*shōhon* or “certified editions”) date

from the 1620s to the 1660s, and contain rudimentary musical markings (the names of musical patterns such as *kiri*, *sanjū*, and *fushi*). By the 1770s there was a marked increase in the number of pattern names. These *shōhon* were for the use of professionals and were not available publicly. When amateurs started to learn *jōruri* from the 1680s, there was increased demand for the publication of pattern names; one reciter, Harima no jō, permitted the sale of texts showing musical patterns, which were circulated among amateurs (Tanaka 1984).

Thus, texts of *jōruri* were used not only in the process of composition, but also in performance, and in the process of transmission. The performers and students mostly wrote in their own personal musical markings to help them in memorizing the music.

Writings about narrative music were also authoritative. For example, Uji Kaga no jō's *Takenoko shū* (1678) gives in its preface and afterword a discussion of aesthetic aspects of performance and instructions of various kinds for amateurs, including some explanation of musical patterns. Another example is Takemoto Chikuma no jō (Takemoto Gidayū) in his notes to a collection of pieces (*danmonoshū*) such as *Jōruri Tōryū ko hyakuban* (c. 1702-3). Further, in *Takemoto Gyoku Hiden* (c. Hōei 1704-10), he gives some simple explanations of named musical patterns, mentioning seven types of *sanjū*, seven types of *okuri*, and *harufushi*, *fushiharu*, *iro*, *fushi*, *suete*, *toru*, *noru*. Gidayū narrative also developed catalogues or lists of its prominent musical patterns, called *fushizukushi*, from the 1780s. There were two types of *fushizukushi*: one, a catalogue in the broader sense, which was a kind of practice piece; the other kind were not for performance, and were indeed lists in the narrow sense. However, these lists of named patterns do not include the majority of the commonest most basic patterns of *gidayū* narrative, perhaps because everyone knew them anyway. According to Tanaka (1984), unnamed patterns form the basis of *gidayū* narrative.

To what extent this use of written materials represents literacy versus orality is a matter which still needs further examination. Even though texts and notations in varying degrees of detail exist, the oral nature of narrative in composition, performance and transmission remains very strong. This is particularly true of the orality of the non-verbal or musical aspect of the narrative, which has persisted longer than the orality of the verbal (textual) narrative, since musical notations have not played a major role in performance or transmission of Japanese narrative music. More significant than written notations is the use of formulaic melodic material, or musical patterns, as a means of preserving and transmitting the musical tradition, and the naming of such patterns. It is possible that such material also played a role in the oral composition of musical narratives in the purely oral stage. It seems that named patterns became a metalanguage for the music, whereby practitioners could talk about melodies and manipulate them in the processes of teaching and memorizing, of composition, both in performance in the oral stage, and in writing down the music alongside texts in the more literate phase. Named musical patterns thus acquired some of the functions of notation, since they were used alongside the texts to indicate what melody to use.

The integration of the verbal and musical aspects of research

Heike texts have to a large degree been worked into literary texts, and are not records of a performed text in the same sense as when a folklorist collects oral narratives in the field. Even so, there may be some justification for invoking the Parry-Lord theory to consider vestigial oral elements. However, this theory was developed in the context of the verbal aspect of oral narrative and does not attempt to account for the musical aspect. A theoretical framework which will explain both the musical and verbal aspects of narrative performance has still to be formulated. Of pressing concern is the question of the relation between formulaic verbal expression and musical patterns which by analogy can be called musical formulas. It is not clear whether they are any more than analogous, and whether the same theory can be applied to musical formulas as to textual formulas. It is however suggestive when considering the relationship between text and music. It is tempting to consider stereotyped musical material as similar to textual formulaism.

Examples of a verbal formula in heike and other early narratives is the phrase *saru hodo ni*, used frequently at the beginning of a new chapter (piece). An example of a theme from heike narrative would be “dressing the hero”, when there is a detailed description of the hero (or other character)’s dress before an important scene. So it is necessary to consider whether musical formulas can be found which correspond to such verbal formulaism.

An analogy can be drawn between verbal and musical formulaism in the following way. The verbal formula at the level of the single phrase or line of text corresponds to phrase length musical patterns, commonly called *senritsukei*. The longer verbal “themes” covering several lines of text can be said to be analogous to sections in musical narrative, commonly called *shodan*. Both of these musical units can be called “formulaic melodic material” in a similar way to the verbal formulaism of the text, in that to a degree they can function as “structural slot fillers”.

Close analysis of this issue has still to be undertaken, but when one starts to look for examples of correspondence between verbal and musical formulaism in heike and *gidayū*, it begins to appear that the relationship between verbal and musical formulas is not necessarily close. A couple of examples will be discussed. The style of narrative delivery which is closest to speech, called *shirakoe* in heike and *kotoba* in *gidayū*, is not necessarily reserved for the speech of characters in the dramatic sense. Particularly in heike, there is no relationship between the speech of characters and the style of narrative delivery. In *gidayū*, on the other hand, speech is commonly, but by no means always, delivered in the *kotoba* mode.

Another example of lack of correspondence between musical formula and the text is the case of the heike formulaic melody *sanjū*; musically this is something like a climax with its high pitch register and melismatic delivery, but the text in *sanjū* sections includes what can only be seen as prosaic aspects of stating the time and place of the scene or action to be described.

Historically, the elaboration and systematization of musical patterns seems to have taken

place late in the second phase (interaction with literate culture) or, more likely, early in the third phase, when the printed media dominated, thus postdating the era of “composition in performance” of the first phase of purely oral narrative, which forms the basis of the oral-formulaic theory. For this reason too, therefore, the function of musical patterns can not be assumed to be the same as that of verbal formulas.

It is noticeable that verbal formulaism decreases from the medieval period to the early modern (Edo) period. The texts of medieval narratives such as *otogizōshi* and *sekkyō-bushi* are far more “old-fashioned” and formulaic, in fact “oral”, than that of “modern” (*tōryū*) *jōruri*. Especially after Chikamatsu, the use of such phrases as *saru hodo ni* all but disappears from *jōruri* texts, except for the case of *ōzatsuma-bushi*, which has a very archaic feel to it. Formulaism did not disappear completely from *jōruri* texts, but it was much less hackneyed.

It happens therefore that at the very time when verbal formulaism weakened, musical elaboration, in the form of elaborate musical patterns, occurred, then weakened again in the phase of modernization. Or put in another way, orality gave way to musicality. As orality declined, musicality arose.

The oral-formulaic theory is probably of limited application to these musical narratives. However, the issue of orality itself, and the differential between verbal and musical orality, is of great interest. It is particularly relevant to the future and preservation of musical narrative in Japan.

Framework for musical comparison

For the remainder of this paper, a framework for comparison of extant genres which originated in different periods will be undertaken, taking the example of *heike* as a representative of phase two, and of *gidayū* as a representative of phase three. Many obvious differences can be pointed out between *heike* narrative, which originated in the thirteenth century, and *gidayū* narrative which originated in the seventeenth century. These differences include a change in the accompanying instrument from *biwa* to *shamisen*, the social status of the performers, the predominant culture of the audience, the content of the narrative, and, perhaps of most significance, the change in narrative situation from one of straight story telling in private occasions and on street corners and in temples to one of dramatic performance in the puppet theatre. In addition, on the musical side, there was a decreasing reliance on formulas in both text and music, more complex musical scales and greater musical elaboration.

While real and significant, these differences can mask underlying similarities of deeper structure. We see important continuities, which allow us to speak of a “narrative tradition” as an entity. These continuities lie principally in the basic structural principles of (mostly) named musical patterns, at two levels: that of the *section* and of the *phrase*.

Structural similarities: vertical narrative structure

Broadly speaking, *heike* and *gidayū* narrative share what can be called vertical structure. This has been called *sekis-sei*, or layered structure, by Yokomichi, who created this potent model to explain the structure of one type of *nō* play (*mugen nō*) (Komada 1993).

Table 1: Vertical narrative structure

	<i>heike</i>	<i>gidayū</i>
Long narrative	<i>Heike Monogatari</i>	Multi-act play (<i>jidaimono</i> or <i>sewamono</i>)
piece	“ku” (<i>kyoku</i>) (<i>daidan</i>) (<i>dan</i>)	<i>dan</i> <i>ba</i>
*section	(<i>dai</i>) <i>senritsukei</i> <i>shōdan</i> <i>kyokusetsu</i>	<i>shōdan</i>
*phrase	<i>senritsukei</i> <i>kyokusetsu</i>	<i>senritsukei</i> <i>kyokusetsu</i>
motive: voice	(<i>senritsukei</i>)	
motive: instrument	<i>bachite</i>	<i>te</i> (independent & linking)

The largest unit is that of the long narrative, which in the case of *heike* is also the genre itself. *Jōruri*, originally the name of the story of the Princess *Jōruri*, became the generic name when the narrative content diversified.

The next level is that of independent units of narrative which can be performed separately, and which correspond to the English term of a “piece of music” or *kyoku* in modern Japanese. The traditional term for this level in *heike* is *ku* (literally “phrase”), and in *gidayū*, *dan*, “section” or act of a play. In a *sewamono* (contemporary) play there are three *maki* instead of the five *dan* of a *jidaimono* (historical play). *Gidayū* also has smaller dramatic units called *ba* “scene”.

The next structural level is that of the section (*shōdan*, literally “small section”). There are apparently no traditional terms for this level, but Yokomichi’s analysis has made the term *shōdan* widespread among researchers. Each section tends to have a unified character or style of delivery (which can be called *katarikuchi*) and is closed off with a definite cadential formula, making them discrete units.

At the next level is the structural unit of the phrase. Phrases are used in more or less fixed sequences to form sections. Although a section may be characterized by a unified style of delivery or other musical characteristics, not all of the phrases which constitute a discrete

section can be defined as musical patterns. This is why the concept of the narrative (sub)style of the section as a whole is necessary. The conspicuous musical pattern is one characteristic of this style, and the most conspicuous melodic patterns are cadential formulas.

These phrases in *heike* are for voice alone, since the *biwa* plays only in between vocal phrases. In *gidayū*, some phrases are for voice alone, but most are for voice and *shamisen*. In *heike*, large independent instrumental solo phrases which precede sung sections, are called *bachi* (*sanjū no bachi* etc.), *bachi* meaning plectrum. In *shamisen* music, although also played with a *bachi* (of somewhat different shape), such instrumental solo parts are called *te* (literally "hand"). Long introductory *shamisen* melodies are called *maebiki* (prelude), and those which come between sections in the piece are called *ai no te* (interludes). Because of their independence, such instrumental preludes and interludes can sometimes be thought of as sections rather than as phrases.

Smaller units than the phrase can be identified both in the voice and instrumental part, but particularly in the instrumental part. *Te* can refer to a *shamisen* phrase or motive of any length. The shortest ones which have some independent identity are several motives which are used in between accompanied vocal phrases, such as *tsunagi* and *kei*.

Each of the layers or levels outlined above tends to be formulaic in nature, but especially important is the formulaic nature of the section and the phrase.

The conventional explanation of Japanese narrative music is that (working upward from the bottom of Table 1) it is made up of previously existing phrase length musical patterns which are cumulated until they form a section; the sections cumulate till they form a piece (*dan*). This is often called a "mosaic", a term which implies a jigsaw like patterning, with a random element; it is also non-linear, lacking a time element.

The vertical relations between the levels do not always seem to be exactly the same for these two genres, especially the case of the section and phrase. The table shows that the terminology used by various researchers is not unified, even by researchers in one genre. This presents problems for cross-genre comparison. Therefore, not only terminologically, but also *conceptually*, the vertical relation between the levels is not easy to differentiate. For example, in *gidayū*, *sanjū* is said to be a *senritsukei* (*kyokusetsu*), although a complex one; whereas in *heike*, various researchers have called it different names: *daisenritsukei* (Kindaichi), *kyokusetsu* (Komoda), *kyokusetsukei* (M. Gamo). Furthermore, Komoda adds levels of analysis in between the levels of section and piece: *dan* (section) and *daidan* (large section). It is not entirely clear whether *sanjū* in *heike* is a *senritsukei* (*kyokusetsu*) or a *shōdan*. It occupied in *Nasu no Yoichi* almost eight minutes of singing (narration), being closed off with the cadential pattern *sagari* (which *always* comes after the *sanjū*). Therefore, this cadential pattern might be said to be part of the substyle (*katarikuchi*) of *sanjū* as a type of *shōdan* instead of a *senritsukei* (formulaic phrase).

Based on my preliminary analysis of these two genres, I would like to suggest this working definition of *shōdan*: a relatively independent unit of narrative, consisting of several lines of text and several musical phrases, and which is closed off with a cadential formula. It

is therefore a self-contained section which tends to have a unified character in terms of musical style, making it formulaic and predictable in character. This gives rise to a set of different types of *shōdan* in any given narrative genre.

My working definition of the Japanese *senritsukei* is a formulaic musical phrase containing one phrase of text (usually 7 + 5 syllables in *gidayū* and other *jōruri*), which has little musical independence.

Further analysis is needed to see how far the concept of musical pattern is indeed the same from one narrative genre to another. It may turn out that the relation between the structural levels (i. e. phrase and section) is indeed different. Another area for cross-genre comparison is varying degrees of pattern dependence. The proportion of patterned to non-patterned material can be expected to be different from genre to genre.

Horizontal narrative structure

The discussion so far has focussed on vertical structure of musical narrative in a rather static way. In addition, a linear dimension should be considered, the time axis of the performance. This can be seen at each of the above levels, but let us look at the level of the section and the phrase.

The cumulation of sections to form a piece is not altogether random. Just as in the content of the narrative, there must be a beginning, a middle and an end, so too in the musical structure, there are some types of section which can only be used at the opening of a piece, or towards the beginning, and others which only can only be used towards the end. In addition, there are certain types of section which are closely tied to a particular content, such as in *heike* narrative the pattern *hiro*i for narrating martial scenes, and the pattern *orikoe* for narrating lyrical romantic or pathetic scenes.

Within the section, with its unified style, there is still usually a development from the beginning to the end in terms of the kind of phrases used. Most clearly, cadential patterns can only be used to close the section, and to a lesser degree there are some special patterns which are used for the opening of some sections. Some complex sections, especially in *gidayū*, commonly begin in free rhythm in declamatory style and progress through a more rhythmic style towards lyrical expressive aria-like singing at the end of the section, to finish with a cadential formulae to give a sense of finality to section. This kind of linear progression, or horizontal structure, is purely formal, not related closely to the content of the narrative.

Komoda (1993) successfully combines vertical and horizontal structure in her analysis of *heike* narrative. It remains to be seen whether her method can be applied to *gidayū* and other narrative styles.

Another area of musical continuity between *heike* and *gidayū* narrative is the progression of the melody through different pitch areas, which serve as the basis of the formation of fixed phrase length patterns. The *heike* patterns *shōjū*, *nijū* and *sanjū* (first level, second level and third level) originally referred in theory to three pitch areas, through which the melody

moved. Eventually, the melody associated with each area came to be formulaic, and became a fixed pattern. The same phenomenon can be seen in *gidayū* narrative, when pitch terms such as *naka*, *gin*, *haru*, which originally meant to “start singing on (these) pitches”, eventually took on the character of musical patterns. This kind of similarity also indicates that the basic musical structure and the approach to forming the narrative has been picked up or inherited by the Edo period narratives from the medieval narratives, whatever other differences they may show.

Comparative analysis of heike and gidayū at the microlevel

The next stage is analysis at the micro-level. The problem of terminology and of concepts has already been discussed. In addition, the following factors cause difficulty.

Heike as an older form is more systematized. As we have seen above, first its text, and later its music were systematized, in an effort to ensure consistency and orthodoxy. This process in which orality moved towards literacy had an inverse relation to the popularity of heike as an art, and also was witness to the separation of music from text. *Gidayū*, on the other hand, is younger, and still visibly changing and developing. There has so far been very little comprehensive musical analysis, despite the existence of catalogues of patterns (*fushizukushi*) from the Edo period. Although patterns play an important part in *gidayū*, there is much non-patterned material, and still room for improvisation.

Komoda's analysis of heike in terms of both vertical and horizontal structure is extremely effective, but a comparable method of analysis for *gidayū* is still to be found.

Conclusion

The study to which this paper is a preliminary step — a musical analysis of contemporary extant styles of musical narrative — will reveal more clearly the underlying continuities as well as clarifying fundamental (as distinct from superficial) differences between them. It seems appropriate therefore to focus on these two basic structural units for the comparative analysis of narrative music: the key concept of musical patterns, and their combination in well-defined sections (*shōdan*) which have a unified style. It is hypothesized that these two units are the key building blocks of all Japanese narrative music (*katari mono*), though the boundary lines between them may be different in different genres. The focus on the formulaic section and phrase as the major units of comparison will contribute towards the establishment of a theory of musical patterns considering their role in composition, their role in transmission, and (if any) their possible role in performance. In addition, light will be thrown on their relation to the narrative text and their relation to textual formulas, in all these processes.

Notes

¹Heike narrative is usually called heikyoku (“heike music”), the musical recitation of the *Heike Monogatari* (The Tale of the Heike). Gidayū narrative is also called *gidayūbushi*, the musical recitation of the puppet theatre (*bunraku*). The name comes from the name of Takemoto Gidayū who in 1684 set up his own new style of *jōruri* narrative in combination with the playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon.

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